



Christianity *and* Modernity in Eastern Europe

Edited by
Bruce R. Berglund
and
Brian Porter-Szűcs



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IN EASTERN EUROPE

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Edited by
BRUCE R. BERGLUND
BRIAN PORTER-SZÚCS



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Foreword

HUGH MCLEOD

Academics are continually urged to “internationalize,” but most of us know how many difficulties stand in the way. Here we have a fine example of international collaboration on a large scale, with the main impetus coming from the United States, but with contributions from seven other countries. The result is a volume that specialists in the history of Christianity in other regions of the world will read with great interest, and a degree of envy. As an historian of religion in Western Europe, I can say that although there is a vast literature on the religious history of the nineteenth century and a growing literature on the twentieth century, there is nothing quite like this. There are a number of collections of sociological studies of religion in the countries of contemporary Europe, but insofar as these have a historical dimension, their concern is with very recent history. And though there are books that compare the religious histories of various Western European countries, the range of countries covered is narrower. They also tend to concentrate on a specific issue, most often secularization. There is indeed a large literature on the religious history of individual west European countries in the twentieth century, but as yet there is a tendency for historians of each country to focus on specific aspects of this history. For instance, in countries such as France, Germany, or Ireland, where the interaction of religion and politics has been most evident and most controversial, church–state relations and the political role of the churches have received most attention. However, writers on other countries, for instance Britain or the Netherlands, have given the most attention to social history.

By contrast, this volume ranges from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first, albeit with a special focus on the communist period,

and there are chapters on most of the countries of Eastern Europe that came under communist rule in the late 1940s. Moreover, the approaches of the various authors are refreshingly varied. The collection is effectively framed by three more general essays by Brian Porter-Szűcs, Patrick Hyder Patterson, and Bruce Berglund, which move freely across national boundaries, bringing out themes of wider significance. In between, however, a rich diversity of themes and methodologies is represented in the contributions on specific countries. There are micro-studies like that of Anca Şincan on "How to Build a Church in Communist Romania"; studies of church leadership at the national level, such as those by Paul Hanebrink on Christian nationalism in Hungary and James Ramon Felak on Catholic politics in Slovakia, which powerfully evoke the mood of a very specific period; and papers that cover several decades, like that by Andreas Kossert on religion and urban growth in Manchester and Łódź. The approaches are often inter-disciplinary: For instance, history interacts in Katharina Kunter's paper with theology, in Galia Valtchinova's with anthropology, and in Bruce Berglund's with geography. Oral history plays a major role in a number of contributions, including those by Natalia Shlikhta, David Doellinger, and Anca Şincan. Apart from the evident importance of interviews in any attempt to write recent history "from the bottom up," they are likely to be especially useful where access to church or state archives is restricted. Recent changes of regime have often led to openings up of state archives, but churches have tended to see a greater continuity of leadership and sometimes a reluctance to facilitate research on controversial aspects of recent history (and even not-so-recent history).

Most of the topics covered in this volume are indeed highly controversial. All aspects of the relationship between Christians and communists continue to be hotly debated, and the relationships between Christians and the radical right even more so. Now the relationship between Christians and Muslims is among the most bitterly contested issues of our day, not least, as Patterson shows, in countries such as Hungary or Slovakia, where there are few Muslims. One of the strengths of this volume is the determination of the authors to understand and explain, rather than telling their readers what they ought to be thinking about these issues, or what those involved in these historical events ought to have done.

But for me the greatest pleasure in reading these essays lay in their authors' persistence in getting behind the clichés and stereotypes, revealing levels of complexity that are often ignored. Thus, rather than confirming the familiar picture of a national Catholicism integral to Polish identity, Jim Bjork uncovers a picture of massive regional differences and a pre-history in which many devout "Polish" Catholics claimed to be "Germans." Looking beyond the familiar symbols—churches demolished by the communists in Romania—Șincan presents the less familiar—churches being built in communist Romania. Moving beyond the stereotype of the secular Czech Lands, Kunter shows how religious minorities—in this case, Protestants—can punch above their weight in the demand for human rights. Shlikhta shows that a key role in the preservation of Greek Catholicism in Western Ukraine was played not only by the few who went underground but also by the many who appeared to acquiesce in the enforced "reunification" with Orthodoxy. Martin C. Putna shows how Czech Catholic writers of the interwar period have to be understood in their own terms (strange as these may seem to many twenty-first century commentators), rather than being forced to choose, as it were, between liberalism, communism, and fascism. And perhaps the biggest surprises of all are found in the story of the Bulgarian seer, Vanga, including the support she received from the communist authorities.

Many of the contributors to this volume are pioneers in fields where relatively little has been written, and in some cases they draw on the work of historians of Western Europe. I hope that in turn, historians of Western Europe will be stimulated by reading this book to question the clichés that hold sway in the religious histories of their own countries. For example, if Bjork can take us so far beyond the picture of a "Catholic Poland," reassuring alike to polemicists of all kinds and to those in search of simple answers, maybe historians of Western Europe should be readier to draw upon all their powers both of skepticism and of empathy, venturing beyond the familiar story of secularization to present us with a similarly differentiated picture of West European societies and their twentieth-century histories—and a history which, instead of telling us what we think we already know, provides us with a full measure of contradictions and surprises.

Preface

This book is the result of a major collaborative project, encompassing several years' worth of conversations, debates, shared bibliographies, circulated papers, and workshop presentations. Our group first met in June 2005, at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At that time, only a few months had passed since death of Pope John Paul II, an event that brought widespread attention to the tumultuous history of the Christian church in twentieth-century Eastern Europe. Many of the biographies and encomia published after the pope's death recounted the trials he had faced as a young worker and seminarian in Nazi-occupied Kraków and, later, as a priest, professor, and archbishop in communist Poland. And the archived news photos of millions of pilgrims surrounding John Paul during his visits to Poland, before and after the fall of communism, reminded people of his—and the church's—triumph over these trials. As historians, however, we recognized that the story of Karol Wojtyła could not be viewed in isolation from those of other men and women of faith who lived through Eastern Europe's twentieth century. In looking at the history of East European Christianity, we were aware of other examples of clergy and lay believers who were emboldened by their faith to challenge the currents of nationalism, antisemitism, and authoritarian ideology. We discussed other Christian artists and intellectuals, like the philosopher and poet Wojtyła, who struggled profoundly with the challenges of their times and sought to express their faith in new and creative ways. And, at the same time, we acknowledged episodes of individual Christians and organizations standing by indifferently, collaborating pragmatically, or engaging actively in the darkest chapters of the region's recent past. We undertook our discussions with the recognition that the history of

Christianity in twentieth-century Eastern Europe cannot be summarized in the story of the Polish pope and his instrumental role in the collapse of communism. It must also include accounts of the Romanian Orthodox Church cooperating with a regime that jailed hundreds of clergy, and Croatian Catholic priests baptizing Orthodox Serbs just before they were massacred, and Reformed intellectuals promoting school curricula in the 1930s that branded Jews as aliens hostile to the Hungarian nation.

The first aim of this project was to unfold and examine this history in its full complexity, to bring to light new sources and to question conventional views. This meant moving beyond the formulas of heroic resistance and contemptible collaboration. As historians, we asked about the motivations and mindsets of Czech Catholics who sided with right-wing political movements, East German Lutherans who participated in dissident movements, and Ukrainian Greek Catholic clergy who acceded to the Soviet government's dissolution of their Church. The results were surprising and illuminating. And as this volume hopefully shows, the prospects for further research into the history of East European Christianity and religion are rich.

A second aim of this project was, of course, to bring this research to the attention of other scholars. From the start, we have conducted our work with two audiences in mind: area specialists in East European studies, and scholars of religion and the history of Christianity. With a few notable exceptions, archive-based, historical research into East European Christianity in the modern period has been largely absent from the scholarly literature in both fields in past decades. Specialists in East European studies, writing in English, for the most part have overlooked Christianity as an element of the region's social and cultural history. Similarly, scholars of religious history have rarely included the lands beyond the Oder and the Alps in their discussions of "European" Christianity. But we (Brian and Bruce) sensed that a growing number of colleagues in East European studies were beginning to explore the religious history of the region, and we wanted to create a forum where these scholars could meet and exchange ideas. We began planning a sustained, collaborative project that would bring together these scholars and produce, ultimately, a volume of essays that would inspire other scholars and graduate students to look at this important, yet overlooked, subject.

The initial event in the project was the meeting in Grand Rapids in 2005, a week-long workshop that addressed methodological approaches and interpretative problems in the larger fields of church history and religious studies. Meetings focused on thematic issues, such as Christianity and nationalism, the church under authoritarian regimes, and Christianity in the postcommunist transition. We read and discussed the work of scholars in the social sciences who have addressed religion in Eastern Europe (e.g., Jan Kubik, Elizabeth Prodromou, Sabrina Ramet, Katherine Verdery, Paul Froese, and Steven Pfaff); historians of Christianity in other parts of Europe and other world regions (e.g., Callum Brown, Jeffrey Cox, Colleen McDannell, Hugh McLeod, and Richard Steigmann-Gall); and scholars in religious studies (e.g., Talal Asad, José Casanova, Grace Davie, Danièle Hervieu-Léger, and Jonathan Z. Smith). Our aim in setting out what was a hefty list of readings and a busy schedule of sessions was to generate a serious and genuine exchange of ideas, and to engage our own research with the insights of scholars working in other disciplines and world regions. We sought to explore together the new theoretical approaches that were (and still are) transforming the field of religious studies, and to see how the distinctive context of Eastern Europe might inform and be informed by broader debates. Launching from the readings, participants deliberated fundamental research questions, some of which dealt with issues specific to East European history, such as the impact of communist rule on Christianity in the region, while others related to themes germane to the history of Christianity throughout Europe, or the rest of the world, such as how the political, cultural, and social upheavals of the 1960s affected the churches. The result of these discussions was that our contributors produced essays that do not simply complement histories of Christianity in Western Europe with case studies from the East. Instead, their work highlights new interpretative and conceptual problems that arise, uniquely, from this region. These problems have significance for the study of the Christian churches in European history, religion and modernization in other world regions, and Christianity in contemporary Europe, East and West.

A year later, in June 2006, we gathered again at the German Historical Institute of Warsaw, Poland, to share preliminary versions of our individual work. Rather than presenting our papers, we devoted our time to critiquing and discussing the article-length essays, which

participants had distributed weeks in advance. In the months after the gathering in Warsaw, we again circulated and discussed revised copies of our essays. The process worked in the way that we, as editors, had intended: Contributors revised their essays while in conversation with the work of their colleagues. Thus the volume you have before you is by no means a simple accumulation of conference papers, but rather a cohesive collection of essays that have come to maturity alongside each other.

Because of space limitations, not every participant in our project could be included here, but we want to thank everyone involved for their inspiring contributions: Jim Bjork, Thomas Bremer, John Connelly, David Doellinger, James Felak, Paul Hanebrink, Daniela Kalkandjieva, Árpád von Klimó, Zoe Knox, Katharina Kunter, Lucian Leustean, Georgi Linkov, Izabella Main, Hugh McLeod, Patrick Patterson, Vjekoslav Perica, Martin Putna, Natalia Shlikhta, Anca Şincan, Richard Steigmann-Gall, and Galia Valtchinova. Special thanks go to Andreas Kossert, who served as a co-organizer for our Grand Rapids workshop and who heroically managed our Warsaw conference.

The meetings in Warsaw and Grand Rapids were possible only with funding from the German Historical Institute and the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship. The Calvin Center has been a generous supporter of this project from the start, and thanks are owed to its former director, Jim Bratt, and to former and current staff members Donna Romanowski, Amy Bergsma, and Dale Williams.

The volume was completed with the editorial assistance of former Calvin students Marissa Christy, Deborah Gray, Kathleen Merz, and Calah Schlabach. Former student Lauren DeVos did much of the formatting for the volume's maps, while Jason VanHorn of Calvin's Geography Department completed the final designs.

It has been a privilege to be part of a collaborative project in which participants truly appreciated each other's contributions—and each other's company. It is our hope that the essays here mark not the end of this process, but an attempt to launch a next phase by encouraging scholarly conversations that will far transcend our small group.

*Ann Arbor
Grand Rapids
June 2009*

Introduction

*Christianity, Christians, and the Story of Modernity in Eastern Europe*¹

BRIAN PORTER-SZÜCS

Studying the history of Christianity in modern Eastern Europe places one at the intersection of two extraordinarily dynamic fields. On the one hand, specialists in the history of Christianity are currently experiencing a period of particular intellectual vitality and innovation. Older forms of confessional history or “church history” were steadily disappearing from most secular universities in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, sharing the tarnished reputation of political, intellectual, and diplomatic history as elite-centered relics of a bygone scholarly era. But just as the “new international history” has given diplomatic history an updated image, just as cultural studies have given new life to intellectual history, so has religious history gained new energy in recent years, thanks to a methodological and theoretical convergence with recent trends in anthropology, sociology, literary studies, and other related disciplines. Meanwhile, and even more dramatically, East European history has emerged from the shadows to enjoy a prominence and respect that could hardly have been imagined twenty years ago. Within Eastern Europe itself up to 1989, historians were hampered by censorship and by a certain degree of isolation from international scholarly trends. Outside the region, East European history had long rested in a neglected corner of the academy, constrained by a less explicit but nonetheless suffocating combination of Cold War politics and ethnonational agendas. The fall of communism opened things up considerably, but the real historiographical revolution only started about a decade later, as a new generation of scholars finally began to transcend the increasingly stale interpretive frameworks and ideological debates of earlier days. We are now in the midst of a thorough reconceptualization of nearly every aspect of East European history, as newly opened

archives and new scholarly approaches place our familiar narratives under a critical light. When we overlay the trajectories of Christian and East European historiography, we see the invigorating confluence of intellectual currents exemplified by the essays you are about to read.

Pulling together the diverse methodological and theoretical strands represented in this volume, we can see a common theme that characterizes the best new scholarship in the field of religious history: a careful attention to individual subjectivity and agency, and (related to this) a critical reconsideration of the analytical categories and teleological narratives that have previously obscured the actual experience of religious life and faith. Historians have long been suspicious of attempts to apply sweeping social theories to the past, and the refrain “it’s more complicated than that” is our stereotypical disciplinary response to generalizations about alleged patterns of social development (particularly when those patterns are used to predict the future). Scholars from other disciplines have often chastised us for an excessive attention to detail, an unwillingness to extrapolate patterns from specific cases, and an allergy to overgeneralization so severe as to prevent us from making any generalizations whatsoever. Admittedly, the caricature of the nearsighted antiquarian is not without some foundation, but the new critical attention to agency is more sophisticated and philosophically informed than old claims about the power of great men to “make history.”² In the field of modern religious history, we are plagued by constraining narratives (usually of spiritual decline and secularization) and broad categories (like “church,” “doctrine,” “believers,” or “religion” itself) that can easily wash out diversity and obscure the role of human agency. In addition to being empirically misleading, many of the entrenched stories we tell about religious history have made it difficult to understand what faith means to individual believers in everyday life, and how those believers actively shape and are shaped by their religious traditions. As we turn towards a study of the experience and meaning of quotidian devotional practices, however, we have to simultaneously reconsider traditional objects of historical analysis like doctrine, theology, and church institutions. Deploying a nice Hegelian resolution to the thesis of church history and the antithesis of the social history of religion, the best new work explores how systems of religious belief structure the meaning of religious acts without ever fully determining those acts. Put differently, this scholarship clarifies how religions are constantly made and remade

by those who practice and believe in them, even as it demonstrates how the ensuing creations simultaneously enable and limit what the faithful can do, say, and imagine.³

When we apply this approach to the study of Christianity in Eastern Europe, we find it necessary to reassess the verities that have long guided us—sometimes astray. The people living between the Baltic Sea and the Balkans have been subjected to many sweeping claims about both their religiosity (which they are said to have in abundance) and their modernity (which they supposedly lack). Various forms of Christian nationalism in the interwar years, the resistance to “godless communism” during the postwar era, the apparent triumph of the Polish Pope in the 1980s, the denominational overtones of the Balkan wars at the end of the twentieth century: All this has fed an image of a distinctive and often problematic East European religiosity. Many both inside and outside the region have contrasted a modern West against a backward East, with an enduring Christianity often cited as one of the defining features of the latter. From a different perspective, others have described the churches of the former Soviet bloc as bastions of dissent and opposition (or objects of violence and oppression), with a religious life shaped and perhaps distorted by decades of political struggle. These various tales were true as far as they went, but they frequently clouded our vision of Christianity in twentieth-century Eastern Europe by turning actual Christians into the passive objects of broad cultural processes and patterns, obscuring the ways in which people built and sustained (and resisted and manipulated) the very generalities that were said to define them. The essays in this volume complicate our familiar stories and stereotypes in a variety of ways, but all of them help restore the complexity and the human agency that had been muffled in earlier accounts. All of them balance the study of Christianity (understood as a set of broad frameworks for perceiving and understanding the world) and the study of Christians (the people who lived within those frameworks) during the tumultuous transformations that we typically lump together under the rubric of “modernity.”

Evoking a formulation that has perhaps been overused, scholars have begun to speak of a “religious turn” in the historiography of modern Europe.⁴ As recently as 1991, David Blackbourn could write that “the history of the church and Catholicism in the last two centuries remains in a historiographical ghetto,” but it would be difficult to sustain

such a pessimistic claim today.⁵ The most obvious manifestation of this “turn” has been the mounting criticism of the old narrative of secularization, according to which the march of modernity leads to a steady, inexorable, and necessary decline in religiosity.⁶ Though this story still frames the way religion is discussed in a variety of public forums, few historians nowadays would repeat it without extensive qualifications. Critics have long pointed to the glaring exception of the United States, where public, let alone private, religiosity never faded. Eventually scholars noticed that modernity outside of Europe was inextricably intertwined with religion and that there were few signs that urbanization, technological change, new forms of politics, or any of the other accoutrements of modern life were accompanied by (much less caused) an erosion of devotion.⁷ Moreover, we are starting to recognize that the very concept of “the secular” is culturally grounded in Catholic and Protestant polemics in ways that make it hard to apply even to Orthodox Christianity, let alone the non-European world.⁸ At the very least, we must recognize that Western Europe is the great exception that demands explanation, not the norm that presages developments in the rest of the world.⁹ But even limiting the secularization story geographically might not save the narrative, because a body of scholarship has been accumulating that undermines the attempt to tell even Europe’s story in terms of a relentless shift to a post-religious era. It is now clear that the present low rates of church attendance and denominational membership in most of Europe are very recent, highly contingent developments, and not necessary features of modernity.¹⁰

Fewer historians of religion still find the secularization thesis useful for their work, but that hardly means that this story has faded away. It is still defended by a handful of social scientists, and it appears regularly in journalism and popular culture.¹¹ Most important for our purposes, the idea of secularization helps establish a distinction between Eastern and Western Europe—a distinction that in part justifies the existence of this book. Casual observers often notice a divide between a religious East and a secular West, and many European politicians have pointed to the public piety of Hungarians, Slovaks, or Poles as a marker of backwardness, an indication that they are not quite ready for full European status. Just as it was once common to speak of a distinctive (and pathological) “Eastern” form of nationalism, so today many commentators perceive a unique, atavistic, not-quite-European form

of public religiosity in the new member states of the EU.¹² Within the region itself, Czechs occasionally cite their own secularism as a sign that they are better prepared than their devout neighbors to be admitted to the modern European club. It can hardly be denied that churches in Warsaw are much fuller on Sundays than churches in Paris, and the use of Christian imagery in public life throughout Eastern Europe would be unimaginable in most West European countries. But if we situate the religious history of the region within a broader global framework, and if we take into account recent critiques of the secularization narrative, the inverse link between piety and progress begins to appear dubious.

As Jeffrey Cox has pointed out, the secularization story survives in the public realm because no alternative narrative to explain religion in the modern world has yet emerged. Cox's own proposal for building such a narrative gets to the heart of why historians have become somewhat reluctant to draw upon the theory of secularization, and why it is particularly troublesome when applied to Eastern Europe. He rejects any overarching theory that ties a decline in religiosity to modernization, urbanization, industrialization, and a grand historiosophical vision of progress and enlightenment.¹³ We can formulate a narrative (but not really a theory) about secularization that holds up to empirical study, but only if we focus primarily on the decline in church attendance and the erosion of the public influence of religious institutions, confine the story in space and time to Europe since the 1960s, and repudiate the claim that such developments *necessarily* follow from the other features of modernization. Such a story, moreover, would be precisely the kind that historians are prone to tell nowadays: one flavored with a heavy dose of contingency and (above all) one that returns agency to religious believers instead of making people the objects of anonymous forces of historical change. Instead of a depersonalized modernity pushing religion to the side, we see adherents remaking (and yes, in many contexts abandoning) their religious traditions and institutions as they struggle to make sense of a changing world. In different settings that process of adjustment played itself out differently, partly because of the choices made by believers and partly because of the specific theological, ideological, political, social, and cultural contours of each religious environment. This points the way towards reconstructing the story of East European Christianity in the modern

era—a story that would avoid entirely the misleading question of whether the region does or does not fit some imagined normative pattern of secularization. Instead, our histories should explain the choices made and the constraints faced by Poles, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and others as they simultaneously constructed and responded to their own particular versions of modernity.

Even as historians bring religion back into the study of the modern world, a parallel (or perhaps perpendicular) development has led to reconsideration of the very concept of “religion” as an analytical tool. Since the late 1970s Jonathan Z. Smith has been making the bold claim that “religion is solely the creation of the scholar’s study. It is created for the scholar’s analytic purposes by his imaginative acts of comparison and generalization. Religion has no independent existence apart from the academy.”¹⁴ Except in a few distinctive contexts (most notably, the twenty-first century United States), people rarely consider themselves “religious” in the abstract—they feel themselves to be Christian, Jewish, Muslim, etc., but the overarching category that encompasses all these faiths (not to mention the diverse practices that have been variously labeled “animism,” “witchcraft,” “folk religions,” and so on) has meaning primarily for the scholars who study such traditions, not the people who live them. An even more profound challenge came when Talal Asad called for a study of the “genealogies of religion” and argued that the term was grounded in specifically “Christian attempts to achieve a coherence in doctrines and practices, rules and regulations.” Setting aside Asad’s overgeneralizations about Christianity, he made the important point that “there cannot be a universal definition of religion, not only because its constituent elements and relationships are historically specific, but because that definition is itself the historical product of discursive processes.”¹⁵ Timothy Fitzgerald took this a step further by claiming provocatively that “the modern concept of religion, as part of a Western ideology, has been exported to non-Western countries in the context of colonialism.”¹⁶ Summarizing this whole line of critique, Catherine Bell has argued that Christianity, “as the prototype for religion, provided all the assumptions with which people began to address historically and geographically different religious cultures. In other words, as the prototype for the general category of ‘religion,’ an idea that itself needed to emerge, Christianity was the major tool used to encompass, understand, and dominate the

multiplicity.”¹⁷ Like so many other terms in our scholarly vocabulary (“class,” “nation,” “gender,” “culture,” “history,” etc.), the idea of “religion” has been subjected to a steady deconstructive barrage of genealogical and etymological analysis.

We can still appreciate the heuristic value of the term “religion,” particularly for those who wish to mount comparative research projects. But there is a growing consensus that when deploying this term, we need to recognize that it comes packed with a historical legacy that traces through Christian (and perhaps even pre-Christian) European history. Once we recognize that “religion” was used initially by Europeans to impose meaning upon a puzzling non-European world, we then have to work hard to expose and purge its colonial legacy. We need to trace its usages, excavate its implications, and study it as a prism through which people have perceived (and misperceived) the world. We need to study alternative classificatory schemes that might appear at first glance to be similar to “religion” (the Ottoman millet system, for example, or early Islamic attempts to understand what came to be called Buddhism and Hinduism) without subsuming them within a framework that is overloaded with the remnants of Catholic and Protestant concepts. And we should explore how people outside Europe have appropriated the term “religion” for their own purposes—often precisely to reclaim a sense of inclusion and equality against claims of Christian hegemony. We can certainly use the word (particularly if those we study also used it), but we must keep in mind its problematic history.

Perhaps the easiest response to our heightened sensitivity about the delicate nature of comparative religious history is to tighten our focus, confining our research to a particular tradition or community while offering only the most tentative and qualified claims about religion writ large. To some extent this is the approach followed in this book, which is deliberately limited to the history of Christianity (not religion more generally) in Eastern Europe. Even though it would probably be methodologically safe in this case to bring Judaism and Islam into view, we have chosen not to do so here. The exclusion of other faith traditions is not an attempt to perpetuate the hegemony of Christianity in the historiography of our region. Rather, we wanted to bracket for now the question of the comparability of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism (not to mention the practices and beliefs that fall

outside the big three monotheisms). We did not want to begin with the assumption that these “religions” belonged by definition within a common analytical framework; that is a question that should be resolved through specific empirical comparative studies, and not categorically predetermined. Once we sketch out the questions that animate historians of Christianity in Eastern Europe, we can move forward in the future to see how our agendas overlap those of Islamic or Judaic studies. To proceed otherwise would not only put the cart before the horse, but perpetuate the mischief that the category of “religion” has performed so often in the past.

In at least one aspect, though, the study of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in Eastern Europe certainly overlap: all three are intertwined with the categories of ethnicity, nationality, and class. At times it seems that religion in this part of the world (and elsewhere as well) is little more than a locus for identification, with only limited ties to theology, doctrine, faith, or devotion. In the Balkan wars of the 1990s, for example, the categories of “Serb” and “Croat” seemed virtually interchangeable with “Orthodox” and “Catholic,” yet it would be hard to link the fighting to any disputes over alternative forms of Christian worship. One could definitely study religion in this sense, as just another sort of “groupness,” another label that people use to demarcate the social world, another means of mobilizing people for social action. In fact, for a long time this approach dominated the study of religion in modern Europe. As social history swept the discipline in the 1970s and 1980s, attention turned to popular religious practices, usually embedding these within thick descriptions of social life in particular times and places. In all too many cases this entailed a near erasure of theology and doctrine, tainted as these topics were by their association with the “old-fashioned” scholarship that studied only the elites who articulated and enforced religious dogma.¹⁸ Shorn of theology, religiosity was typically re-interpreted as a manifestation of social protest or conflict, as a product of economic disruption, as the somewhat clouded way that people articulated their grievances, hopes, or ambitions. If not explicitly identified as “false consciousness,” religion was described as a form of social organization, a means to strengthen group cohesion and set “us” apart from “them.” To be sure, the social history of religion produced some magnificent studies, and we will never again be able to act as if the clergy alone defines any religious tradition.¹⁹ But the

concomitant (though often inadvertent) marginalization of the study of theology and faith *as such* has washed out much of the substantive content of religious practice, making it difficult to understand religious believers on their own terms or to differentiate a religious ceremony from a political rally. Sacred visions became psychological puzzles, visionaries and believers had to be either deceptive or delusional, and the spread of devotional practices had to be explained with reference to “real” social forces.

All this has been changing in the past decade or so, as more and more historians try to bring the study of faith back into the study of religion, to seek an understanding of belief without reducing it to something else (economics, social forces, demography, etc.), and to stop asking what religious people of the past were *really* doing when they spoke of apparitions, the afterlife, miracles, or salvation. Brad Gregory has gone so far as to argue that our task should be to “understand religious persons such that the latter would recognize themselves in what is said about them.”²⁰ While this might go a bit too far—as any therapist will tell us, self-recognition is by no means self-evident or self-explanatory—Gregory’s injunction does point us in the right direction. In many cases we are best served by avoiding the quick assumption that a religious belief is a mystification covering up some “real” social force. Instead, we ought to pay attention to how people describe their religious worlds, acknowledging that the actual substance of a particular faith has a significance that transcends the social function of religion. This is part of a broader move within our discipline towards the study of meaning. We historians of the early twenty-first century are increasingly casting ourselves as translators and mediators, as participants in the project of drawing the overlapping “hermeneutic circles” that Hans-Georg Gadamer urged us to pursue so many decades ago.²¹ To borrow a distinction long made by sociologists, we are moving from *explanation* to a search for *meaning* and *understanding*. To explain something is to recast it in new terms, to fix it in relationships of cause and effect that stand outside the phenomenon’s own subjective perspective. For religious historians, this might entail demonstrating how a devotional practice helped sustain communal bonds, how a new spiritual movement served to mobilize the weak against their oppression, or how clerical institutions enforced social discipline and obedience. To understand something or someone, in contrast, requires an attempt

to narrow the gap between alien worldviews and to appreciate as fully as possible the motives and the goals of historical agents (without—and this is the hard part—surrendering one’s own critical perspective). To be sure, the attempt to explain religion has brought a great many insights, but this approach has been marked by a denial (usually implicit) that the interpretive frameworks of the believers themselves are irrelevant. Durkheim was quite open in denying that religion had any “special expertise for explaining man and the world. In fact, religion does not know itself.” The specific content of belief, Durkheim argued, was irrelevant. “What basic difference,” he asked provocatively, “is there between Christians’ celebrating the principal dates of Christ’s life, Jews’ celebrating the exodus from Egypt or the promulgation of the Decalogue, and a citizens’ meeting commemorating the advent of a new moral charter or some other great event of national life?”²² For him there was no difference, but religious historians today are acutely aware that something important is lost in this approach. Not only does it become hard to investigate the political, social, or cultural ramifications of specific theologies or devotional practices, but we are blinded to the subjective meaning of religious belief.²³

The turn towards the study of meaning allows us to move beyond what I take to be an underlying dilemma (one that is certainly not limited to the field of religious history): the sterile polarization between agency and structure, and the ensuing confusion about the ontological status of religion as a causal force. As Robert Ford Campany has observed, the most important problem with the term “religion” is not that it is ahistorical (after all, historians are necessarily translators, using the language of today to describe the past). More serious is the fact that we have too often treated religions as if they were historical agents in their own right. Campany says, “If possible, the new metaphors [used to talk about religion] should avoid picturing religions as really existent things in the word; as organisms; as hard-sided, clearly demarcated containers of people and things; and as agents; because picturing them in all these ways falsifies the actual state of things and skews our research questions in unfortunate ways. Religions do not exist, at least not in the same way that people and their textual and visual artifacts and performances do. And when religions are metaphorically imagined as doing things, it becomes harder to see the agents who really and non-metaphorically do things: people.”²⁴

In this sense, religion does not exist in Europe any more than it does in the non-Christian world, if we take “existence” to imply that religion constitutes a historical agent or an independent causal force. Rather, people express faith, people make and sustain religious institutions, people perform religious rituals, people associate around religious labels, and people write and speak within religious discourses. Religion fits most comfortably as the object of a sentence, not the subject. Religions, as such, do not serve as historical actors, and as scholars we should focus on how people make, utilize, change, and sustain religious institutions, doctrines, vocabularies, images, and so forth. We should find it easy to debunk monocausal claims that X did something solely *because* she was a Christian, turning things around so that we study how X participated in the never-ending constitution and reconstitution of Christianity by behaving or speaking in this or that way.²⁵ As Jim Bjork persuasively demonstrates in this volume, careful historical research can uncover the ideological and cultural work required to create a religious totality that seems at first glance to be entirely unproblematic and timeless. The communities, institutions, or cultural phenomena produced and reproduced in this way should always be treated as the objects, not the agents, of history.²⁶

But once we stop positing Christianity as a historical actor and turn instead towards the beliefs and actions of particular Christians, we risk getting lost in the microcosmic and the particular. In our focus on heterogeneity, we sometimes lose sight of how clusters of meaning can constrain even as they enable, how frameworks for perceiving the world can set the limits of agency even as they are being constructed and reconstructed by living, breathing historical agents. In my own work on Roman Catholicism in twentieth-century Poland, I have struggled with the question of whether, considering the heterogeneity and individual agency of the faithful, we should avoid any general statements about “what Catholics believe” or “how Catholics responded” to this or that.²⁷ On one level, we should indeed approach such claims with great caution. Even on seemingly fundamental matters of doctrine (for example, the existence of hell) or moral teachings (for example, abortion), many Catholics diverge from the Church’s teachings. Perhaps they are ignorant of those teachings, or perhaps they choose to perceive them as secondary concerns. Perhaps they simply disagree with those teachings, and think the Vatican has gone astray. In any

case, it is quite easy to find Catholics who support the legalization of abortion or Catholics who were once members of the Communist Party. Does this, then, invalidate the statements “Catholics oppose abortion,” and “Catholics are anti-communist”? Certainly such statements obscure heterogeneity and imply a simplistic unidirectional causal trajectory between ideology and individual belief, but that does not mean that we must remain silent about Catholicism in general or weaken every affirmation with qualifiers like “some” or “most.” Nor does it mean that we should move from Catholicism in general to “Polish Catholicism,” or “twentieth-century Polish Catholicism,” or “the twentieth-century Polish hierarchy” or “Cardinal Wyszyński in 1956.” Such moves just push the problem one step back without really resolving it. The methodological key is to pay attention to the differences between two terms: Catholicism and Catholics (or, in an even more complex way, Christianity and Christians). The differences among Catholics are indeed huge, but despite everything, there is a central (albeit mutable) core to Catholicism (as an “ism”—an ideology and a theology) around which all heterogeneity must circle and within which believers must enact and reconstitute their faith. The “ism” does not simply disintegrate into its many disparate adherents, and one can write its history without implying an exaggerated coherence or a determinative causal power. Catholicism does, for example, teach that birth control is a sin, and this remains true even though most Catholics feel otherwise. Moreover, such teachings have real consequences, even when they fail to become hegemonic. Another way of putting this is to describe Catholicism in terms of its putative boundaries. Catholics argue about what exactly constitutes the core of the faith (or the core political and social consequences of the faith), but when speaking about that core they inevitably participate in the process of setting restraints on what they can say and imagine. Described in a more positive way, the delineation of these boundaries creates a worldview that enables those within it to see some things that others might not notice (or at least, not in the same way).

The existence of boundaries around what can and cannot be said as a Catholic does not mean, however, that Catholicism exists above and beyond the Catholics who live within it. Rather, we should see it as something that is constantly being created, sustained, and re-created by those who participate in it (within more or less rigid constraints).

Even though Catholicism is not coterminous with the population of people who call themselves Catholic, it is nonetheless a conceptual vocabulary that exists only insofar as it is spoken, a mental framework that is defined by those who think within it. Catholicism, as an “ism,” sets some parameters on thought and action, but only *determines* thought and action in imperfect, historically variable, and contextually bounded ways. The same approach can be applied to the study of Eastern Orthodoxy and perhaps also Protestantism (though in the latter case we might be better served by retreating to tighter denominational categories like Lutheranism, Calvinism, etc.) Above all, the word “Christianity” itself is delineated yet fluid, constraining yet enabling, and always under construction.

By studying Christian history in this way—with a focus on what we might call the enabling constraints of religious forms—we move closer to a resolution of the methodological dilemmas discussed in this chapter. We can set aside the tired dualities of agency vs. structure, popular vs. elite, and practice vs. doctrine, because we approach religions as flexible conceptual frameworks that are formed and re-formed while necessarily and simultaneously establishing the parameters of and potentials for such re-formation. The story of secularization and the concept of religion itself can be both critiqued and retained, because each has an undeniable analytical utility as long as we recognize how they, too, serve as enabling constraints. In each of the essays that follow, we see how religious people in Eastern Europe worked with the beliefs, institutions, theologies, ideologies, and cultural frames that were accessible to them, subtly altering each in turn. We see how Christians were shaped by the analytical terminology of religious historiography—because these same terms are a fundamental part of the vocabulary of modernity—while simultaneously defying any attempt to subsume their human stories within any familiar narratives or models.

As historians of religion have been working through all these difficult scholarly problems, historians of Eastern Europe have been confronting challenges and opportunities of their own. The fall of communism in 1989 was almost as transformative for those who study the region as for those who live there (and doubly so for those who do both). Scholars within the former Soviet bloc could publish without worrying about censorship, academic exchanges with West European and North American institutions could expand, social scientists all over the world

were captivated by the depth and extent of the transformations, and all of us could gain access to previously closed archives. In the early 1990s a flood of books and articles could proclaim, with reference to newly available resources, “We now know...”²⁸ But I would argue that all these revelations, as important as they are, fade when set alongside the intellectual sea change that came as the study of Eastern Europe finally escaped its Cold War moorings. It was not so much that old debates from the 1960s or 1970s were finally settled with the availability of historical documents (though this did happen in a few cases). Rather, the evaporation of the communist regimes freed the imaginations of historians to pursue new questions with new methodologies. Specialists in Eastern Europe felt empowered to look at issues that too often escaped our attention in the charged atmosphere of the Cold War, and in doing so our subfield became more and more integrated with broader trends in our discipline. We are now seeing exciting monographs exploring gender,²⁹ popular culture and everyday life,³⁰ sexuality,³¹ and other topics that had received little or no coverage before 1989. Meanwhile, familiar objects of study like nationalism³² and economic modernization³³ have been explored in provocative new ways. Anglophone scholarship has played an enormous role in launching these new scholarly trends, but there has been a great deal of innovative work within Eastern Europe itself.³⁴

It is impossible to boil these diverse works down to a single intellectual trend, but they are very generally marked by three related ambitions (and these, in turn, relate back to some of the issues discussed in the first part of this chapter). First, they seek to transcend the black-and-white morality tales that marked so much Cold War historiography about Eastern Europe. In a region that has been characterized by such violence and political turmoil, it has been all too easy to draw stark pictures of good and evil, victimization and oppression, totalitarian regimes and courageous liberation movements. From the “little dictators” of the interwar years through the nightmare of World War II to the brutality of Stalinism, Eastern Europe faced no shortage of horror in the twentieth century. But now that the most dramatic and obvious forms of political violence have subsided (even, at long last, in the former Yugoslavia), scholars are finding it easier to turn their attention to the complexities that were once obscured by the emotional immediacy of evil.

The second impulse behind much of the new scholarship on Eastern Europe involves an attempt to integrate the familiar stories of high politics and high culture with the everyday experiences of previously anonymous men and women. Certainly historians within Eastern Europe wrote a great deal about workers or peasants before 1989, and much of this research was of high quality despite the obligatory overlay of tendentious official rhetoric. Even the best of those texts, however, shared the limitations of much (though by no means all) social history produced in the West at the same time: They were not about people as much as they were about “the people,” and they tended to swallow human agency and variety with broad analytical categories like “development,” “industrialization,” “modernization,” or “the working class.” The new scholarship on everyday life and popular culture is more than just an inversion of top-down political or cultural history. It is grounded in the aspiration to invest the depersonalized categories of the social sciences with actual human content, restoring the fluidity, unpredictability, and above all the heterogeneity that was subordinated in earlier work.

Related to this is the final innovation of recent years: a more critical approach towards categories that are too often taken for granted and naturalized in both common parlance and academic writing. This is particularly true in the field of gender studies, which in American and West European scholarship led the way in the difficult struggle to de-naturalize our categories of social analysis—and has had impact far beyond the study of masculinity and femininity. Beginning in the early 1980s with efforts to historicize and problematize “the nation,”³⁵ scholars of Eastern Europe likewise proceeded to deconstruct key terms like “society,” “women,” “modernity,” and more. The same impulse that led scholars to challenge the category of religion, in other words, swept up a whole range of terms that were once used unreflectively to understand Eastern Europe. Most scholars today, for example, would recognize that reading East European postwar history as an extended conflict between “the state” and “society” obscures far more than it reveals—the project now is to unpack these overloaded terms, tracing their development and mapping out their ideological implications. Historians are increasingly sensitive to the ways in which the terms we use when talking about the past can reinforce norms and expectations that are themselves produced through historical processes.

All of these trends are evident in the field of East European Christian history, where they intersect with the developments outlined in the first part of this essay. Indeed, the most important trend is precisely the desire to establish such an intersection, to integrate or respond to the methodological and theoretical ideas that have animated historians of Christianity specializing in other parts of the world. Though fully developed comparative projects linking Eastern and Western Europe are still rare (with the notable exception of Andreas Kossert's essay in this volume), and projects juxtaposing Eastern Europe with the non-European world are even less common, we can see in the newest work an explicit ambition to speak beyond the audience of area specialists.³⁶ When assembling the essays included in this volume, one of our priorities was to highlight work that would be read with interest by historians of Christianity (or religious-studies specialists more broadly) who have no background in the specificities of Eastern Europe.

We used two criteria to delineate the geographical and chronological parameters of this volume. First, we focused on the eastern part of the European continent, an area where nearly all residents consider themselves European but where the social, economic, and political processes that have characterized the continent's modernity were experienced belatedly, if at all. Second, we focused on those areas where communist regimes held power from the 1940s to the 1980s—a time long enough to shape the patterns of popular religiosity and the institutional history of the churches, but short enough to ensure that communism did not entirely define the experience of faith in the modern world.

The term “modernity” is one of those labels that have been called into question by recent scholarship, placed under a deconstructive microscope as a product of the very historical processes it purports to describe.³⁷ For a long time Eastern Europe has been characterized as “backward” or “underdeveloped,” with an idealized norm of modernization held up as the measure by which to judge the region. Insofar as Bulgaria or Slovakia failed to replicate the patterns found in England or Germany, this was taken to be a puzzle that required a special explanation. The search for the pathologies that “held back” Eastern Europe occupied the imaginations of generations of scholars (not to mention activists and politicians within the region itself).³⁸ Insofar as this framework is utilized by those we study, we historians have to

take it seriously—but we must always remember that “backwardness” (like “religion”) is an object of analysis and interpretation, not a neutral descriptive category. With this in mind, we want to tread carefully around any teleological or essentializing narratives of Christian history in Eastern Europe. Common to all the authors included in this volume is a pronounced caution towards an overly sharp dichotomy between Western (Catholic and Protestant) and Eastern (Orthodox) Christianity. On the one hand, we want to pay close attention to the relationship between theology, religious practice, and the socio-political functions of the churches. As mentioned earlier, the challenge today is to understand the worldviews and behaviors of people unlike ourselves, and we cannot do this unless we are sensitive to both faith and practice. This, in turn, requires a sensitivity to the theological and devotional issues that divide Christians from one another, so we have to pay attention to the many ways in which Protestantism, Catholicism, and Orthodoxy differed. On the other hand, these differences have become so overloaded with sweeping generalizations and the rhetoric of “civilizational” clashes that one can hardly evoke the separation between the Eastern and Western churches without stumbling upon prejudices and misconceptions.³⁹ With this in mind, in assembling this volume we have not treated the split between Rome and Constantinople as definitive, but merely as one more element that brings devotional diversity to our region.

The somewhat arbitrary territorial demarcation used in this book includes only those areas where communism took power in the 1940s—in other words, we set Russia and most of the Soviet Union to the side.⁴⁰ The sites explored in this book include those where all the various manifestations of twentieth-century Europe were experienced: capitalist industrialization and the Great Depression, the rise of the radical right and racial politics, World War II, Stalinism, the “actually existing socialism” from the 1960s to the 1980s, and the apparent triumph of neoliberalism since the 1990s. Though the territorial demarcation of Eastern Europe has a complicated legacy (tied up intimately, but not exclusively, with the history of the Cold War), for our purposes it has some distinctive merits. If we are concerned primarily with the intertwined histories of Christianity and modernity, few parts of the world provide as rich a laboratory as the lands bounded approximately by Germanophones to the west and Russophones to the east.

Like their coreligionists in Western Europe, Christians in these countries initially experienced (and created) modernization in a capitalist form, and they endured the same patterns of early twentieth-century political turmoil. But like Christians further east, the faithful of Eastern Europe lived through several decades of communist rule, confronting regimes that were dedicated to the promotion of atheism. Just as significantly, Christians in this part of the world could experience Christianity as Europeans (thus avoiding the complications that arise in missionary territories) while at the same time coping with a subordinate, sometimes even colonial relationship with religious centers located elsewhere. Eastern Europe—as both “Eastern” and “European”—has always occupied a uniquely liminal position, belonging neither to the metropol nor to the colonies (or perhaps belonging simultaneously to both). This ambiguity has shaped the religious history of the region just as much as it has framed cultural, social, and political developments.

Since Christians in Eastern Europe have had to confront the radical left, the radical right, and everything in between (all within a rather short period of time), this part of the world provides us with a magnificent opportunity to explore the ideological position of Christianity throughout the twentieth century. As Martin Putna points out in his essay for this volume, the attempt by Christians to find a road amidst what many considered to be a range of unacceptable options was fraught with irresolvable tensions. During the interwar years, hostility towards both socialism and liberalism was nearly universal among the Christian faithful, and the proximity of the Bolshevik revolution only intensified this opposition. As a result, many Christians were drawn towards an awkward alliance with the radical right based on shared anti-communism and antisemitism. Although significant ideological walls continued to separate the secular and religious right during the interwar years, and although a variety of Christian political parties distanced themselves from the racist and authoritarian extremes, the points of convergence were frequently sufficient to allow for cooperation against common foes. The legacy of this tragic era can still be felt today, but very few historians have successfully transcended the polemic between anti-clericalism and apologetics. For some, references to “Hitler’s Pope” continue to shape the image of interwar and wartime Christianity; from others, we find equally dogged denials of *any*

Christian complicity in the crimes of Nazism, fascism, or its many local variants.⁴¹ The challenge now is to provide critical interpretations of Christian politics that go beyond denunciation or exposé—a challenge admirably met in the essay by Paul Hanebrink in this volume.⁴² The need for understanding is made no less urgent by the fact that the path towards such understanding can lead us through some uncomfortable explorations of Christian hate speech. No serious observer can deny that many early twentieth-century Christians—including some high church figures from every denomination—participated openly and enthusiastically in the various racist and authoritarian movements of the day, including Nazism. A few individuals—Monsignor Jozef Tiso was the most famous example, but sadly there were many more—even crossed the fateful line separating ideological flirtation and war crimes. Scholars are now confronting a fundamental but vexing question: Was the overlap between Christianity and racism in the 1930s and 1940s merely a product of individual transgressions, or was there something deeper at work? Was there something in the theological, institutional, or cultural history of Christianity that contributed to the horrors of mid-twentieth-century Europe? If so, how can we disaggregate the causal significance of Christianity from the myriad other social, cultural, institutional, and ideological forces at play? The Vatican came down decisively on this point, arguing that “the *Shoah* was the work of a thoroughly modern neo-pagan regime. Its antisemitism had its roots outside of Christianity and, in pursuing its aims, it did not hesitate to oppose the Church and persecute her members also.”⁴³ Scholars, not surprisingly, have taken sharply opposing views on this point, but so far the debate has generated more heat than light. Ultimately, the answer will only be found by taking the hermeneutic and anthropological move described in the first part of this essay. It does little good to count the number of Christians who helped the Jews and compare this with the number who openly collaborated with the Nazis. If such an absurd calculus could even be attempted—and how could it, given the fuzziness of categories like resistance and collaboration?—the result would only be dueling examples of virtue and vice. But it is equally fruitless to look only at the official teachings of Christian clerics and theologians. Only a careful excavation of the lived world of Christianity as it existed at the time will show us how the teachings of the churches were woven together in practice with the racism, authoritarianism, and

ultimately the violence of the radical right. As suggested above, if we swing Christianity over from the subject to the object of our sentences, we can see how people of the interwar and wartime eras lived a Christianity that could coexist with racism, and then clarify what sorts of Christianity they had to create in order to facilitate such coexistence. Only then can we comfortably consider whether the faith affirmed by believers in other times and places has any relation to the one embodied and enacted by those who considered fascism and Christianity to be compatible.

The ideological position of the churches after World War II is problematic in a different way. One of the most frequent claims seen in the newest scholarship on East European Christianity is that the familiar dichotomies of state/church and oppression/resistance have outlived their usefulness. Without a doubt, the regimes of the Soviet bloc were hostile to traditional religious institutions, and the Bolsheviks came to power with a commitment to stamp out what they labeled mystification and false consciousness.⁴⁴ After World War II the Christian churches suffered a great deal of harassment and persecution, from the imprisonment of Primates Stefan Wyszyński of Poland, József Mindszenty of Hungary, and František Tomášek of Czechoslovakia, to the later demolition of churches by the Ceaușescu regime in Romania. The clergy was infiltrated by the security services, those who openly professed their faith lost all hope of career advancement, Christian publications were tightly censored (where they were permitted at all), and the official media ridiculed and slandered the churches on a regular basis. Officially the communist regimes advocated a strict separation of church and state, civil marriages on a West European model, and a secular educational system—an agenda that seemed to align them with liberals elsewhere in the modern world. But in fact the communists' goals went much further: Whereas liberals wanted to separate church and state, the communists wanted to actively discourage religion and ultimately wean the population from all "superstitions." As affirmed in the protocols of a closed meeting of the Commission on the Clergy (a body within the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party) in 1963, "We do not want either ideological co-existence with the Church, nor any sort of dialogue, as some suggest, because our worldview and that of the Church do not have equal rights."⁴⁵ In other words, instead of liberalism's basically negative message *against* a

clerical state, communism strove *for* the positive construction of an anti-religious state. Some scholars have even argued that communism was a sort of “political religion” in its own right, thus explaining its particularly vociferous hostility towards all (other) forms of faith.⁴⁶ After the fall of communism, a wave of books appeared detailing the persecution that the churches endured as a result of the state’s atheistic ambitions.⁴⁷ These texts occasionally veered off towards the genre of martyrology, and sometimes the authors blurred the line between the communist agenda of suppressing religion and the liberal demand to separate church and state. Nonetheless, the suffering they recounted was, on the whole, quite real.

Without in any way discounting the oppressive nature of the old regimes or devaluing the exposés of the 1990s, the next step for scholars is to flesh out the complexities and subtleties of the church-state relationship during the four decades of communism. There was a huge difference, after all, between the violence of the early 1950s and the harassment of the 1970s, between the rapprochement established in Poland and the tensions that persisted elsewhere, between the implacability of the official rhetoric (on both sides) and the day-to-day cooperation between clergy and local authorities. The latter phenomenon has received almost no attention from scholars—a problem addressed by several contributors to this volume. As we are now realizing, local priests and party officials tried to maneuver around and with each other in the pursuit of goals that sometimes conflicted and sometimes overlapped. Even in the harsh climate of Romania or Czechoslovakia, not to mention under the more open regimes in Hungary and Poland, the authorities eventually recognized that they were not going to destroy the churches anytime soon. For their part, priests came to accept that the communists controlled resources that their parishes needed, so some engagement with the state was unavoidable. As illustrated in the essays by Anca Șincan, Natalia Shlikhta, and Galia Valtchinova, in this environment each side was fated to work with the other, leading to an intricate dance that belies any picture of unrelenting conflict, any simplistic dichotomy of oppression and resistance. Both the militant atheism of the early Bolsheviks and the *non possumus* of Pius XII’s anti-communist crusade became distant echoes for those who had to coexist in the same village. As James Felak shows in his contribution to this volume, the institutional authorities in the Christian churches were

united in their hostility to the communist takeovers of the 1940s, but even during those polarized years the response from the rank-and-file clergy (not to mention ordinary believers) was far from homogeneous. On some issues, David Doellinger notes, Christians could even exploit the values ostensibly promoted by the official rhetoric of state propaganda to advance their own ideological and moral objectives.

Recognizing, however, that it is a gross oversimplification to focus solely on the story of coercion and confrontation, it would be equally misguided to ignore the ideological tensions between church and state under communism. Even if we take into account the day-to-day co-existence between priests and Party officials, the worldviews of Christianity and communism could hardly be reconciled in the long term (though precisely why this was the case remains an open question). In several countries this antipathy generated a narrative that lionized the institutions of the churches (the Catholic Church in Poland in particular) as beacons of human rights amidst the darkness of totalitarian rule.⁴⁸ What is all too often overlooked in this story, however, is that those who opposed the communist regimes specifically as Christians did not necessarily share common goals with dissidents from liberal or social democratic backgrounds. This might seem obvious, but the tacit presumption underlying many Cold War accounts was that the slogans of “human rights” and “freedom” constituted substantive points of ideological convergence among anti-communists of all stripes. As Katharina Kunter points out in this volume, these slogans were, in fact, thinly defined rallying cries that were understood in varying, even diametrically opposed ways by different opposition groups. Self-described Christian political parties that emerged from old anti-communist dissidents have been shifting increasingly towards authoritarian nationalist agendas—witness the trajectories of FIDESZ in Hungary or the Law and Justice Party in Poland. Recognizing this, however, should not inspire a reflexive anticlericalism, as if the calls by East European Christians in the 1970s and 1980s for freedom, independence, and peace were nothing but smokescreens concealing theocratic ambitions. Rather, we should cultivate a more nuanced approach to political Christianity, one that strives (once again) to understand the positions of anti-communist Christians on their own terms, to reconstruct the worldviews that could link opposition to communism twenty years ago and opposition to liberalism today. We should also take greater care

to de-couple political and cultural anti-modernism. For example, the ideas, institutional forms, and devotional practices associated with the Vatican II *aggiornamento* had far more resonance in Poland than we might assume, given the Polish Church's reputation as a bastion of conservative religiosity.⁴⁹ This will seem paradoxical only to those who imagine Catholicism as a monolithic force with precise causal implications. If we interpret Catholicism instead as a cultural framework that is forever being reconfigured by those who speak and act within it (even as it constrains what they say and do), we would expect the political consequences of Catholic identity to both change over time and vary from individual to individual. Once again, the challenge for the scholar is to trace both the fluidity and the constraints, both the heterogeneity and the cohesion, emphasizing the limits and the possibilities on all sides.

Historians are notoriously loath to comment on current events, but students of Christianity in Eastern Europe can hardly avoid the contemporary implications of their work. As we study the part of Europe where secularization is weakest of all, and where patterns of religiosity seem to resemble those that have come to define twenty-first-century life in much of the rest of the world, we have a great deal to offer those trying to understand the role of faith in the (post-?)modern era. The primary goal of this book—to demonstrate the importance of East European Christian history to those who would not normally consider this part of the world—is in fact an easy one, because in many ways the significance of our topic should be evident. The contributors to this volume represent the methodologies of social history, cultural history, intellectual history, political history, and historical anthropology, but all are united in the conviction that our work can and should speak to anyone who is struggling to understand Christianity—and religion more broadly—in the troubled world of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

NOTES

- 1 In addition to the workshop participants mentioned in the preface to this book, I would like to thank two of my colleagues at the University of Michigan, Geneviève Zubrzycki and Paul Johnson, who graciously commented on an earlier version of this essay. I would also like to give special thanks to my co-editor Bruce Berglund. Not only did he offer an invaluable critique of a draft of this essay, but this whole project was his brainchild, and without his initiative and commitment the book would not exist.
- 2 Delineating the subject of a historical sentence is a subtle challenge, grounded in a decades-old effort to escape from the unproductive dichotomy of agency vs. structure. For a summary of this debate as well as an important contribution to it, see William H. Sewell, Jr., "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency and Transformation," *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 1 (1992): 1–29; "Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille," *Theory and Society* 25 (1996): 841–881.
- 3 An obvious source of inspiration here is Pierre Bourdieu, particularly his essay, "Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field," *Comparative Social Research* 13 (1991): 1–44.
- 4 *Church History* 75, no. 1 (March 2006): 120–162. The essays in that collection include Jeffrey Cox, "Provincializing Christendom: The Case of Great Britain," 120–130; Thomas Kselman, "Challenging Dechristianization: The Historiography of Religion in Modern France," 130–139; George S. Williamson, "A Religious Sonderweg? Reflections on the Sacred and the Secular in the Historiography of Modern Germany," 139–157; Thomas Albert Howard, "Commentary—A 'Religious Turn' in Modern European Historiography?" 157–162. For a broader summary of new work in the field of Christian history, see Anne Thayer, "What's New in the History of Christianity?" *Religion Compass* 1/2 (2007): 279–293. For more on the resurgence of religion in the academy, see Stanley Fish, "One University, Under God," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 51, no. 18 (January 7, 2005): C1; Teresa Watanabe, "The New Gospel of Academia," *Los Angeles Times* (October 18, 2000): A1. There have been quite a few "religious turns" recently. See Roger Gilbert, "Awash with Angels: The Religious Turn in Nineties Poetry," *Contemporary Literature* 42, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 238–269; Bruce Holsinger, "Literary History and the Religious Turn," *English Language Notes* 44, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 1–76; John-Panteleimon Manoussakis, *After God: Richard Kearney and the Religious Turn in Continental Philosophy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005); Martha Minow, "On Being a Religious Professional: The Religious Turn in Professional Ethics," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 150, no. 2 (December 2001): 661–668; Hent de Vries, *Philosophy and the Turn to Religion* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

- 5 David Blackbourn, "The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution: A Review Article," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33, no. 4 (October 1991): 779.
- 6 One of the earliest examples of the secularization thesis came in James Hastings Nichols, *The History of Christianity 1650–1950: The Secularization of the West* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956). More systematic articulations of the narrative can be found in Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the 19th Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Marcel Gauchet, *Le désenchantement du monde: une histoire politique de la religion* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985); Alan Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England* (London: Longman, 1976); David Martin, *General Theory of Secularization* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978).
- 7 For some attempts to take this story beyond Europe, see Jeffrey K. Hadden and Anson Shupe, eds., *Secularization and Fundamentalism Reconsidered* (New York: Paragon House, 1989); Eric O. Hanson, ed., *Religion and Politics in the International System Today* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Derek R. Peterson and Darren R. Walhof, eds., *The Invention of Religion: Rethinking Belief in Politics and History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Peter van der Veer, ed., *Conversion to Modernities: The Globalization of Christianity* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds., *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999). See also all the papers delivered at the 2005 conference of the International Society for Intellectual History, held at the University of California at Davis (<http://www.history.upenn.edu/isih/>), accessed March 9, 2007.
- 8 On the different approaches to "the secular" in Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism, see Daniela Kalkandzhieva, "The Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Secularization of Society" (paper presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 2006). For a broader discussion of this point, see Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).
- 9 This argument is made persuasively in Hartmut Lehmann, *Säkularisierung. Der europäische Sonderweg in Sachen Religion* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004). More generally, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- 10 For Britain the questioning began as early as Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm, 1974), and culminated in Robin Gill, *The Myth of the Empty Church* (London: SPCK, 1993). More recently, Callum Brown has stressed that in Britain, what we see as secularization was in fact a sudden, dramatic change that

began only in the 1960s, not the process of long-term or inevitable trends. Brown also brings to our attention the ways in which this recent development has been sharply gendered. See Callum Brown, "Secularization, the Growth of Militancy and the Spiritual Revolution: Religious Change and Gender Power in Britain, 1901–2001," *Historical Research* (OnlineEarly Articles), <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1468-2281.2007.00417.x> (accessed April 11, 2007). In other European contexts, see Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *The Historical Journal* 38, no. 3 (1995): 647–670; David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in a Nineteenth-Century German Village* (New York: Random House, 1995); Grace Davie, *Religion in Modern Europe: A Memory Mutates* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Susan Desan, *Reclaiming the Sacred: Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); Danièle Hervieu-Léger, *Catholicisme, la fin d'un monde* (Paris: Bayard, 2003); Dagmar Herzog, *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Baden* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Dale Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, 1560–1791* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996); Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984). At the 2006 conference in Warsaw that inspired this collection, several papers explored the way religious ideas penetrated spheres typically presented as thoroughly secularized. See particularly the unpublished essays by Bruce Berglund, "Prague Castle as Sacred Acropolis: Faith, Conviction, and Skepticism in the House of Masaryk," and Georgi Linkov, "The Specificity of Religious Painting in Bulgaria in the late 19th–early 20th Centuries: Style and Semantics" (papers presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 2006).

- 11 For a productive interdisciplinary exchange on this topic, see Steve Bruce, ed., *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992). For attempts to recover a modified version of the secularization thesis, see Steve Bruce, "Modernisation, Religious Diversity and Rational Choice in Eastern Europe," *Religion, State and Society* 27, no. 3/4 (1999): 265–275; José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005).
- 12 The dichotomy between "Eastern" and "Western" nationalism can be seen in Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

- University Press, 1992); Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944); John Plamenatz, "Two Types of Nationalism," in *Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea*, Eugene Kamenka, ed., (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973), 22–37.
- 13 Jeffrey Cox, "Master Narratives of Long-Term Religious Change," in Hugh McLeod and Werner Ustorf, eds., *The Decline of Christendom in Western Europe, 1750–2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 201–217.
 - 14 Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), xi. Here Smith included several essays he wrote between 1974 and 1980. Selections of his later work can be found in *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
 - 15 Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 29.
 - 16 Timothy Fitzgerald, *The Ideology of Religious Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), ix. Others to make this critique include Robert Ford Campney, "On the Very Idea of Religions," *History of Religions* 42 (2003): 289–319; Daniel Dubuisson, *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge, and Ideology*, translated by William Sayers (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
 - 17 Catherine Bell, "Paradigms behind (and before) the Modern Concept of Religion," *History and Theory* 45 (December 2006): 30.
 - 18 As Jon Butler lamented, "[f]or better or worse we have all become social historians of religion, perhaps so much so that some of us may secretly long for opportunities to return to intellectual history and theology." See Butler, "Theory and God in Gotham," *History and Theory* 45 (December 2006): 52.
 - 19 In particular, moving beyond the almost always male clergy allowed historians of religion to benefit from the insights of women's history and (even more important) gender history. For a good overview, see Elizabeth A. Clark, "Women, Gender, and the Study of Christian History," *Church History* 70, no. 3 (September 2001): 395–426.
 - 20 Brad S. Gregory, "The Other Confessional History: On Secular Bias in the Study of Religion," *History and Theory* 45 (December 2006): 132.
 - 21 On Gadamer's hermeneutics, see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, translated and edited by David E. Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Martin Jay, "Should Intellectual History Take a Linguistic Turn? Reflections on the Habermas-Gadamer Debate," in Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan, eds., *Modern European Intellectual History: Reappraisals and New Perspectives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 86–110; Hans Herbert Kogler, *The Power of Dialogue:*

- Critical Hermeneutics after Gadamer and Foucault* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).
- 22 Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, translated by Karen E. Fields (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 432, 429.
 - 23 Even one of the hardest of the hard social sciences, psychology, has taught us that the specific content of faith can matter. A recent international study demonstrated that exposure to a call to violence sanctioned by religious authority will make both believers and non-believers behave more violently than comparable injunctions from secular sources. See Brad Bushman et al., "When God Sanctions Killing: Effect of Scriptural Violence on Aggression," *Social Psychology* 18, no. 3 (March 2007): 204–207.
 - 24 Robert Ford Campney, "On the Very Idea of Religions," *History of Religions* 42 (2003): 319.
 - 25 This approach can be compared to Jonathan Z. Smith's advocacy of a "polythetic" rather than a "monothetic" definition of religion in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 18.
 - 26 An excellent example of this approach—one which shows how religion can become a site for contestation rather than an autonomous causal force—is Geneviève Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
 - 27 These issues will be explored at length in my forthcoming book, *For God and Fatherland: Catholicism, Poland, and Modernity*. See also Brian Porter, "Antisemitism and the Search for a Catholic Modernity," in Robert Blobaum, ed., *Antisemitism and Its Opponents in Modern Poland* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 103–123; "Hetmanka and Mother: Representing the Virgin Mary in Modern Poland," *Contemporary European History* 14, no. 2 (May 2005): 151–170; "Marking the Boundaries of the Faith: Catholic Modernism and the Radical Right in Early Twentieth-Century Poland," in Elwira M. Grossman, ed., *Studies in Language, Literature and Cultural Mythology in Poland: Investigating "the Other"* (Lewiston-Lampeter, Wales: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 261–286; "Thy Kingdom Come: Patriotism and Prophecy in 19th Century Poland," *The Catholic Historical Review* 89, no. 2 (2003): 213–238.
 - 28 John Lewis Gaddis used this for the title of his 1997 book *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
 - 29 Susan Gal and Gail Kligman, eds., *Reproducing Gender: Politics, Publics, and Everyday Life after Socialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Joanna Goven, "The Gendered Foundations of Hungarian Socialism: State, Society, and the Anti-Politics of Anti-Feminism, 1949–1990" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1993); Katherine R. Jolluck, *Exile and Identity: Polish Women in the Soviet Union during World War II* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002); Gail Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceausescu's Romania* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998); Lynne Haney, *Inventing the*

- Needy: Gender and the Politics of Welfare in Hungary* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002); Kristi Long, *We All Fought for Freedom: Women in Poland's Solidarity Movement* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996).
- 30 Timothy J. Cooley, *Making Music in the Polish Tatras: Tourists, Ethnographers, and Mountain Musicians* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Gábor Gyáni, *Parlor and Kitchen: Housing and Domestic Culture in Budapest, 1870–1940* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2002); Michael Kennedy, ed., *Envisioning Eastern Europe: Postcommunist Cultural Studies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994); Padraic Kenney, *A Carnival of Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Istvan Rev, *Retroactive Justice: Prehistory of Post-Communism* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005); Anna Szemere, *Up from the Underground: The Culture of Rock Music in Postsocialist Hungary* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).
- 31 Ellen Berry, ed., *Post-Communism and the Body Politic* (New York: NYU Press, 1995): 197–228; Hadley Z. Renkin, “Ambiguous Identities, Ambiguous Transitions: Lesbians, Gays, and the Sexual Politics of Citizenship in Postsocialist Hungary” (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2007); Denise Roman, *Fragmented Identities: Popular Culture, Sex, and Everyday Life in Postcommunist Romania* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003); Bea Sándor, “Constantly Rewriting Herself: Lesbian Representations and Representations of Lesbians in Hungary from the 1980s to the Present” (MA thesis, Central European University, 1999).
- 32 Three works in particular have totally recast old approaches to the study of nationalism in Eastern Europe: Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); and Mary Neuburger, *The Orient Within: Muslim Minorities and the Negotiation of Nationhood in Modern Bulgaria* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- 33 Here the work of anthropologists has been crucial: Elizabeth C. Dunn, *Privatizing Poland: Baby Food, Big Business, and the Remaking of Labor* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004); Martha Lampland, *The Object of Labor: Commodification in Socialist Hungary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare: Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).
- 34 In my own field of Polish history, studies of popular culture, everyday life, gender, and sexuality have only just started appearing. Some examples include: Maria Ciechomska, *Od matriarchatu do feminizmu* (Poznań: Brama, 1996); Agnieszka Graff, *Świat bez kobiet* (Warsaw: W.A.B., 2001); Maria Janion, *Kobiety i duch inności* (Warsaw: Sic, 2006); Andrzej Kozieł, *Za chwilę dalszy ciąg programu... Telewizja Polska czterech dekad 1952–1989* (Warsaw: ASPRA-JR, 2003); Krzysztof Kosiński, *O nową mentalność. Życie*

- codzienne w szkołach 1945–1956* (Warsaw: Trio, 2000); Jolanta Muszyńska, Aneta Osiak, and Dorota Wojtera, *Obraz codzienności w prasie stanu wojennego* (Warsaw: Trio, 2006); Piotr Oseka, *Rytuały Stalinizmu* (Warsaw: Trio, 2007); Paweł Sowiński, *Wakacje w Polsce Ludowej* (Warsaw: Trio, 2005); Anna Żarnowska and Andrzej Szwarc, *Równe prawa i nierówne szanse: Kobiety w Polsce międzywojennej* (Warsaw: DiG, 2000); Przemysław Zieliński, *Scena rockowa w PRL* (Warsaw: Trio, 2005).
- 35 This is where I would be expected to provide a citation to Benedict Anderson, but since he is now quoted by scholars of nationalism more reflexively and predictably than Lenin was in Soviet scholarship, I will refrain from doing so.
 - 36 Another paper from our Warsaw conference in June 2006 explored the comparison between Eastern and Western Christianity, but unfortunately we were not able to include it here: Árpád Klimó, "Catholic Identity Discourses in Hungary and Italy between 1945 and 1970."
 - 37 I explored the construction of the concept of modernity in Poland in *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in 19th Century Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
 - 38 See, for example, Ivan T. Berend, *History Derailed: Central and Eastern Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003); Ivan T. Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944–1993: Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Economic Backwardness in Eastern Europe: Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages until the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Andrew C. Janos, *The Politics of Backwardness in Hungary, 1825–1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); Andrew Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World: The Politics of Borderlands from Pre-communism to Post-Communism* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000). For a more critical approach to the concept of "backwardness"—and the whole idea of a distinct "Eastern Europe"—see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).
 - 39 Certainly the most influential attempt to draw a sharp divide between the "Western" and "Eastern Orthodox" worlds is Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996). We cannot blame Huntington for this idea, however; he merely repeats a vision of Orthodoxy that dates back to (at least) the nineteenth century. For some of the early history of the attempt to define the Orthodox world as a distinct civilization, see Andrzej Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy: History of a Conservative Utopia in Nineteenth-century Russian Thought*, trans. Hilda Andrews Rusiecka (New York: Clarendon Press, 1975). These issues were also discussed by two of the participants at our Warsaw conference: Patrick Patterson, "Defenders of Christendom?"

- Christian Politics and the Challenge of Islam in Europe East and West since 1989,” and Vjekoslav Perica, “Churches and the Twilight of the Slavic Myth” (papers presented at the conference “Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe,” German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 2006).
- 40 The modern history of Russian Christianity is well represented elsewhere: for example, see Tatiana A. Chumachenko, *Church and State in Soviet Russia: Russian Orthodoxy from World War II to the Khrushchev Years*, ed. and trans. Edward E. Roslof (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002); Nathaniel Davis, *A Long Walk to Church: A Contemporary History of Russian Orthodoxy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003); Valerie A. Kivelson and Robert H. Greene, eds., *Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice under the Tsars* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003); Edward E. Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovatism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905–1946* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).
- 41 A harsh polemical tone was set by John Cornwell, *Hitler’s Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999); and David Kertzer, *The Popes against the Jews: The Vatican’s Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001). Other books critical of the Roman Catholic Church’s relationship to Nazism include Frank J. Coppa, *The Papacy, the Jews, and the Holocaust* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2006); Guenter Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2000); Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930–1965* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Susan Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002). Responses to these charges include Pierre Blet, *Pius XII and the Second World War: According to the Archives of the Vatican*, translated by Lawrence Johnson (New York: Paulist Press, 1999); Thomas Brechenmacher, *Der Vatikan und die Juden: Geschichte einer unheiligen Beziehung vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 2005); Ronald J. Rychlak, *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2000); David G. Dalin, *The Myth of Hitler’s Pope: Pope Pius XII and His Secret War against Nazi Germany* (Washington, DC: Regency Publishers, 2005). The Protestant relationship to Nazism has also generated a heated debate: see Shelley Baranowski, *The Confessing Church, Conservative Elites, and the Nazi State* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986); Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest Against Hitler* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); John S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches 1933–1945* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968); Wolfgang Gerlach, *And the Witnesses Were Silent: The Confessing Church and the Persecution of the Jews* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); Beate Ruhm von Oppen, *Religion and Resistance to Nazism* (Princeton, NJ: Center of International Studies, Princeton University, 1971); Theodore N. Thomas, *Women Against Hitler: Christian Resistance in the Third Reich* (Westport,

- CT: Praeger Publishers, 1995); J.R.C. Wright, *"Above Parties": The Political Attitudes of the German Protestant Church Leadership, 1918–1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). A good overview of all these debates can be found in Robert P. Ericksen and Susannah Heschel, eds., *Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999). From the other direction, Richard Steigmann-Gall offers a study of the Nazi approach towards Christianity in *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For a comparative approach to the study of Christianity and the antisemitic right during the early twentieth century, see Donald J. Dietrich, ed., *Christian Responses to the Holocaust: Moral and Ethical Issues* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003); and Kevin P. Spicer, ed., *Antisemitism, Christian Ambivalence, and the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007). The literature on the Christian response to the radical right in Eastern Europe is extraordinarily thin. See Paul Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism in Hungary, 1890–1944* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); Ivan Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka: Dr. Jozef Tiso 1887–1947* (Bratislava: Archa, 1998); Dariusz Libionka, *Dzieło miłosierdzia chrześcijańskiego: Polskie duchowieństwo a Żydzi w latach okupacji hitlerowskiej* (Warsaw, 1969); Ronald Modras, *The Catholic Church and Antisemitism: Poland, 1933–1939* (Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994).
- 42 See also the unpublished paper presented at our 2006 conference in Warsaw, John Connelly, "The Contradictions of Antisemitismuskritik: The Viennese Journal *Die Erfüllung*, 1934–38."
- 43 Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, "We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah" (March 16, 1998), http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_16031998_shoah_en.html (accessed April 14, 2007). For a good discussion of the differences between religious hostility towards the Jews and modern antisemitism, see Christhard Hoffmann, "Christlicher Antijudaismus und moderner Antisemitismus," in Leonore Siegele-Wenschkewitz, ed., *Christlicher Antijudaismus und Antisemitismus. Theologische und kirchliche Programme Deutscher Christen* (Frankfurt am Main: Haag & Herchen, 1994).
- 44 On the policies towards religion in the early Soviet Union, see Paul Gabel, *And God Created Lenin: Marxism vs. Religion in Russia, 1917–1929* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2005); Robert Greene, "Bodies Like Bright Stars: Saints and Relics in Orthodox Russia, 1860s–1920s" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2004); William B. Husband, *"Godless Communists": Atheism and Society in Soviet Russia, 1917–1932* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000); Glennys Young, *Power and the Sacred in Revolutionary Russia: Religious Activists in the Village* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

- 45 Dokument 16: Protokół z posiedzenia Komisji KC dls Kleru w dniu 18 czerwca 1963 r., in *Tajne dokumenty: Państwo-Kościół 1960–1980* (London: Aneks, 1996), 75.
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- 48 This narrative can be found, in one form or another, in both popular hagiographies and serious scholarly accounts. See Jan Kubik, *The Power of Symbols against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994); Malachi Martin, *Keys of This Blood: Pope John Paul II Versus Russia and the West for Control of the New World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991); Tad Szulc, *Pope John Paul II* (New York: Scribner, 1995); George Weigel, *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the*

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Religion in Urban Everyday Life

Shaping Modernity in Łódź and Manchester, 1820–1914

ANDREAS KOSSERT

Religion Versus Urbanization/Modernization?

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were regarded in many Western countries as a time of religious crisis. The crisis was generally believed to be most acute in cities, especially among the working class. This article focuses on religion and its impact on everyday life in two major European industrial cities—Manchester in the West, and Łódź in Central Europe.¹

As gigantic centers of textile production, Łódź and Manchester, known as the “Promised Land” and “Cottonopolis,” respectively, became mythical cities in their own regions. When it came to new methods of manufacturing, both cities stood at the forefront of technical revolution, especially in the cotton industry. In the span of a few decades in the nineteenth century, Łódź and Manchester attracted hundreds of thousands of new inhabitants seeking to create a new life out of the dramatic changes of the Industrial Revolution. Migrants of each social stratum focused their desires, professional and private, on making that myth a reality. As migration centers, Łódź and Manchester created and amalgamated ethnic and religious diversity. Yet with this flood of newcomers, neither city could provide social continuity to established groups and institutions. During the nineteenth century, all public institutions had to be newly established, and both cities witnessed the emergence of new social strata. Manchester and Łódź thus functioned as spaces of modernization, with rapid innovation in the organization of and communication among social and ethnic groups, institutions, and individuals. Steady migration caused the constant threat of ethnic and religious tensions to become virulent, which, in highly

industrialized textile centers, could erupt in the form of a labor movement.

During the nineteenth century, cities grew at a rate unprecedented in world history, and the population of second-tier cities like Łódź and Manchester proliferated. Since the beginning of this social revolution, there have been two opposing views about its meaning for religious traditions. By the 1830s and 1840s, many voices proclaimed that cities were strongholds of irreligion. Most famous, perhaps, was Friedrich Engels' 1844 study of the English working class, in which he claimed that religion had effectively died out.² While the comments of Engels and others about the absence of religion dealt only with the working class, some observers saw the city in its entirety as a religious desert. One of Engels' contemporaries, a London clergyman, claimed in a sermon of 1844 that "the life of cities is essentially a worldly life," whereas "the country with its pure serenity—oh, how unlike the hot thick breath of the towns—of itself inspires some feelings of religion."³

Other evidence of the time, however, indicates that religion in industrial cities was not swept away by secularization but rather was an integral part of modern urban society. One Manchester businessman, for instance, bitterly complained about the noise his workers made on a Sunday evening, not in a pub, curiously, but in a chapel. "In the tavern there is no loud shouting or singing on Sunday evenings, but in the preaching-home the noise is so great that until late at night the neighbors cannot sleep."⁴ Some people, instead of finding the worship service a nuisance or oddity, saw cities as dynamic centers of religious activism. To a Scottish Evangelical in the 1830s, Glasgow was the "Gospel City," leading the nation in its religiously inspired reform movements and its evangelistic enterprises.⁵ Of course, most of these commentators were deeply involved in the religious controversies of their time, and their commitments strongly colored their judgments. For instance, Nonconformists' enthusiasm for urbanization was influenced by their view that cities were a powerful counterweight to the religious traditionalism of the countryside.

The same differences of interpretation can be found among modern historians and sociologists writing the religious history of the nineteenth century. The question of the causes and extent of secularization in Western societies has been hotly debated. The classical approach to the question, which goes back to Max Weber, views secularization as a

universal process.⁶ Exponents of modernization theory generally argue that religion was in severe decline in the cities of nineteenth and early twentieth century Europe and that its strength lay in backward rural communities where modernizing forces had not yet penetrated.⁷

However, Callum Brown holds that nineteenth-century urbanization frequently stimulated religious growth.⁸ This approach states that big cities by their nature were pluralistic; they lent themselves to the formation of numerous subcultures, since the supervision of such matters as morals, beliefs, and religious practices by official authorities was no longer practicable. This counterargument that urbanization stimulates religious growth has been presented in its most ambitious form by the American sociologists Roger Finke and Rodney Stark. They contend that urbanization is often associated with increasing religious pluralism, and that the greater the degree of pluralism, the higher the proportion of the population that is likely to be religiously active. This increase in religiosity is fueled by competition and the multiplication of denominations, which permitted each religious group to cater to the needs of a particular section of the market; in other words, the greater the variety of “brands” available, the more likely that every “customer” would find something she or he liked.⁹

Recognizing the vast literature on the social history of industrial Europe, this article will address only a few questions, and these will inevitably lead to further questions.¹⁰ The case of Manchester and religious and socio-economic developments in England will be covered more broadly, as the European religious revival of the mid-nineteenth century originated here and witnessed multiple, regionally modified receptions. At the same time, the English case offers a wide range of interesting comparative aspects for a discussion of Łódź and Central Europe. Though tremendously challenged by the extreme changes of urbanization and industrialization, religion was a persistent element of urban society in Manchester and Łódź, occupying public spaces in diverse ways. The established religious institutions of Łódź and Manchester had to create new patterns of social and pastoral activities to remain attractive. Religion was visible in everyday life and stimulated various social activities among all classes. Indeed, for various reasons, religion—as an alternative to socialist and secular tendencies—became fashionable in both cities. For example, the new bourgeoisie defined its social role with reference to a piety and social prestige defined by

Christian morality. These two case studies thus give evidence of how multiethnic and multi-religious cities created a lively climate of religious competition, vital for charitable activities and social life as a whole.¹¹ But any comparative study should consider whether Central and Eastern Europe witnessed a different development than Western Europe. Have there been different forms of religious practice in Eastern Europe? Has secularization or the expression of belief in a modern setting played out differently in each region? As this article will show, hardly any research has been done on Eastern Europe, and as a result, most questions and explanation patterns are based on the Western example. Therefore, this article should be understood as a laboratory for setting up a theoretical approach to piety and religiosity in Europe East and West, raising more questions than answers.

Łódź and Manchester—Two Urban Microcosms

Łódź and Manchester were both major European industrial cities with myths of unlimited economic and social growth. Manchester was heralded as the ultimate sign of the Industrial Revolution long before Łódź was. Benjamin Disraeli celebrated Manchester in his novel *Coningsby* as the “most wonderful city of modernity.”¹² Leon Faucher described it in 1844 as a city with an extraordinary atmosphere, where the chimney smoke disclosed a mysterious activity.¹³ Manchester functioned as a synonym for something surreal: the revolutionary social change and economic prosperity of the Machine Era. Everywhere in Europe new “Manchesters” were built. Elberfeld was christened the “German Manchester,” Chemnitz the Saxon, and even Lyon was described as the “Manchester of France.” Even though it was imitated, Manchester also had negative connotations. Early socialists called their political opponents “Manchester liberals.” Frederick Engels, who was sent initially to Manchester by his father in order to heal his “political volatility,” described the new spirit of the capitalist entrepreneur with the following anecdote: “Once I walked with a businessman through Manchester and spoke with him about the unworthy and bad houses and the appalling living conditions in the working-class quarters, and I admitted to him that I had never had seen a similarly miserable city. The man listened silently until I stopped, and at the corner, where we

parted, finally replied: 'And nonetheless you can earn a fortune here. Good Morning, Sir!'"¹⁴

Manchester and its successors in Europe shared an atmosphere charged with the thrill of quick wealth and a rapid advance up the social ladder. With an almost religious zeal, entrepreneurs and workers arrived in those textile centers to try their luck. They discovered quickly that time was kept not by church bells, but by factory sirens and the hammering of the looms. Thomas Carlyle summarized Manchester in 1839 with these words: "Hast thou heard, with sound ears, the awakening of a Manchester, on Monday morning, at half-past five by the clock; the rushing off of its thousand mills, like the boom of an Atlantic tide, ten-thousand times ten-thousand spools and spindles all set humming there—it is perhaps, if thou knew it well, sublime as a Niagara, or more so."¹⁵

Manchester embodied industrialization itself, but Łódź quickly gained almost the same economic importance in the eastern half of Europe. In Łódź the desire for quick wealth dominated many peoples' lives. By 1900, the city, part of Russian-ruled Poland, had become the largest textile center in the empire. With the fall of customs barriers between the Kingdom of Poland and the rest of the Russian Empire, expansion of the mills advanced until 94 percent of all goods manufactured in Łódź were textile products. Władysław Reymont, later winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, wrote his famous novel, *Promised Land*, after a visit to Łódź in 1896–1897. Various business circles tried to prevent publication of the book, which described Łódź as a capitalist hell. *Promised Land* was simply a cynical caricature of the almost religious expectation of the first entrepreneurs and workers who came to Łódź, embracing a false myth that would lead only to their own demise. Reymont summoned up the myth, which made Łódź so attractive: "We all are here in Łódź in order to set up a business, to make money. None of us wants to stay here forever. And everybody makes money, as much as he is able to and as much as he can."¹⁶

The entrepreneurs who came to Łódź to set up businesses were typically German or Jewish. Arthur Rubinstein, the Łódź-born pianist, described his hometown as being dominated by Jewish and German entrepreneurs "who made Łódź the most important industrial center after Moscow within the Czarist Russian Empire."¹⁷ Reymont introduced the term *Lodzermensch*, which has been part of the Polish lan-

guage ever since. For him, a *Lodzermensch* personified human evil: a purely profit-orientated, unscrupulous, and cheating businessman. Although derived from German and Yiddish, *Lodzermensch* described a capitalist with neither morals nor virtues, regardless of nationality.¹⁸ Afterward, however, the term did take on a nationalist edge. In 1937, at the peak of Polish-German tensions, a Polish encyclopedia defined *Lodzermensch* as follows: “Łódźermensch—a type of a Łódź businessman who gained profits under German-Jewish influence, has no national identity, and focuses only on his money-making.”¹⁹

Both Łódź and Manchester were hubs of migration, and their rapid population growth led to an incredible ethnic and religious diversity. In 1839, Łódź had 6,648 Germans (78 percent of the population), 1,135 Poles (13 percent) and 776 Jews (9 percent). In terms of religious affiliation, nearly all Germans were counted as Lutherans, and nearly all Poles as Roman Catholics; Jews were recorded in official statistics as a national as well as a religious group. Until the end of World War I, undoubtedly, German and Jewish entrepreneurs were the most influential figures in the local community. For many decades Poles provided the workforce, coming from the surrounding countryside as unskilled workers to find work in the mills and factories. As the table shows, the largest part of Łódź’s population growth came from this influx of Poles into the city. Only after 1918, with the reestablishment of the Polish Republic, did Poles gain more influence in urban governance.

Table 2.1. Łódź: population in 1864, 1897, and 1913²⁰

	1864	1897	1913
Germans	22,531 (67.2%)	67,300 (21.4%)	75,000 (14.8%)
Jews	6,539 (19.5%)	92,400 (29.4%)	171,900 (34.0%)
Poles	4,456 (13.3%)	145,600 (46.4%)	251,700 (49.7%)
Orthodox (Russians)	7 (0%)	7,400 (2.4%)	6,300 (1.3%)
Total	33,533 (100%)	314,000 (100%)	506,100 (100%)

Manchester also saw a rapid growth of its population in the nineteenth century. The size of the City of Manchester (as distinct from Greater Manchester) rose from around 70,000 in 1800 to 544,000 one hun-

dred years later.²¹ In religious terms, the English city was even more diverse than Łódź. According to the famous church attendance census in March 1851, Anglicans accounted only for 34.4 percent of the people attending services that day (in 32 churches), Roman Catholics accounted for 23.3 percent (seven churches), and the Nonconformists 42.3 percent of church attendees (80 chapels and churches). Among those Nonconformist groups, which formed a stronghold in Manchester, were Independents (or Congregationalists), Baptists, several types of Presbyterians, four or five types of Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians, Swedenborgians, and others.²² Similarly, Manchester's ethnic structure was nearly as diverse as an East European city. In studies of Manchester, only the Irish (by far the largest minority group) have drawn some attention.²³ In 1841, just before the Irish Famine, 30,304 Irish (born in Ireland) lived in Manchester; in 1851 the number was 52,801 (13.1 percent of the entire population). After London, Liverpool, and Glasgow, the city was home to the fourth-largest Irish community in Britain. The unifying element of the Irish community was its Catholic community life. From the outside, the Irish were seen as a threat to public health and were regarded as lawless, uncivilized, and fanatic. For the English majority, the Irish remained an isolated and exotic group; their religion and sense of community led to antipathy and even hatred.²⁴

Next to the Irish, the Germans were the next largest minority group, although they were typically found among factory owners rather than workers. Germans were the most prominent foreign-born group among Manchester's factory owners: of the 420 companies owned by foreign entrepreneurs in 1870, 154 were in German hands.²⁵ These "sons of the old Deutschland" in the business life of Manchester were praised in an 1888 article in the *Manchester Guardian*: "If one proceeded to test the quality of the Manchester Royal Exchange minus its German element, it would almost be like sampling rum punch out of which some malicious mixer had left the rum. Should this seem an exaggeration, let the Master of the Exchange get up and bar the door some day and keep out the Teutons. Echoes of comparative emptiness would ring to the roof."²⁶

Manchester also had a large Jewish community. In addition to Jews from Eastern Europe, there were many Sephardic Jews, who arrived in large numbers after 1856 from Corfu, Aleppo, Constantinople, and

Morocco. By 1900, Sephardim numbered some 20,000.²⁷ In addition, Manchester after 1860 had communities of Greeks, who maintained their own Greek Orthodox church, as well as Armenians and Italians.²⁸

While recognizing this mix of peoples in both cities, we should not idealize the multiculturalism of the past. Neither Manchester nor Łódź experienced multiethnic harmony or peaceful religious dialogue. Rather, each witnessed the rise of nationalist groups, who were often at the forefront of social, religious, and ethnic conflicts. There is, however, a fundamental difference in the approaches to this ethnic diversity in the historiography of Łódź and Manchester. The literature on Łódź, as a city of Eastern Europe, has been dominated until recently by controversies over its ethnic and national structure. German research on Łódź has overvalued the German influence, while Polish studies have praised the Poles' contribution to the city. Meanwhile, the Jewish influence has been mostly ignored or marginalized.²⁹ Currently, a supranational perspective is on the rise, one that celebrates the multicultural past of Łódź. On the one hand, this trend reflects the understandable search for a local identity that had been suppressed in socialist times. On the other hand, in this new line of scholarship the past is analyzed less critically and idealized more than ever before.³⁰ In contrast, research done on Manchester has long focused only on the industrial center's working class. Even though this research has focused on Manchester's social history, there has been no synthetic work on the ways in which urban society was altered by industrialization and by the city's ethnic and religious complexity.³¹

Forms of New Political and Social Integration: Religion in the Industrial Society

Manchester, the biggest industrial center in the world, was described by Engels as "hell on earth." He wrote in 1845: "If one wants to see how little space a human being needs to move, how little air—and which air!—he needs to breathe, how little civilization can exist, he has to come here."³² In 1898 the socialist politician Rosa Luxemburg wrote her dissertation on the Łódź textile workers, a study that functioned as a companion piece to Engels' memoir about Manchester and provided an important source for the social dimension of Łódź's history.³³ For

obvious reasons both industrial giants were ideal research topics for social and economic studies, and the nurturing of the labor and trade union movements helped to make them natural sites for social and labor historians. Yet this research took a very materialist view of society. Studies that traced the changing structure of the cotton industry gave detailed accounts of loom workers' wages, but they often had little to say about the broad sweep of the spirit of the people. Polish historiography during the communist period, meanwhile, completely neglected the social functions of religion, other than its nation-constituting function. But church historians must also bear some responsibility for the imbalance and gaps remaining in the modern history of Christianity. While social historians have often been of the Left, church historians have presented the history of Christianity from an institutional point of view. Only recently has the situation changed. During the last two decades, religion has been rediscovered and fully integrated into the nineteenth-century social history of Britain.³⁴ In the case of Łódź, however, there still are no publications on the religious dimension of the industrial microcosm, including religiosity as an aspect of urban life for the various national communities.

Research into religion is necessary not only to gain a more complete understanding of Łódź's social history but also to situate the city within a broader European process: the astonishing religious revival that took place during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The case of England, as the site of the revival's origin, is important. It established a model of religious and social change that was repeated on the Continent. Before the Industrial Revolution, the Anglican Church was able to keep its outstanding position because of the tight connection between the clergy and the landed aristocracy. The Church gained a relative amount of external strength through this connection, but the Anglican community was long characterized by a sort of spiritual monotony, stigmatized by contemporaries as a rotten church with a flock that was running away. The new industrial centers, which created the completely new social stratum of factory workers, revealed the lack of adequate pastoral services. In this context, as Peter Wende has argued, John Wesley and other figures outside of the official church proclaimed a new religious enthusiasm "through the experience of existential sinfulness of the individual earthly existence to come to the conviction, that Christ died for the forgiveness of all our sins."³⁵ Wesley

became a missionary to the new industrialized England, and Methodism emerged as the first mass movement of that era based on religious and ethical motives, therefore becoming a driving force for later social and political reformers.³⁶ It is not insignificant that John Wesley was called the “Father of the new English democracy.”³⁷

The spread of the religious revival was closely linked with the Industrial Revolution and the challenges that the newly emerging social and political problems presented to societies. It moved across Northern Europe, especially to major German cities and industrial districts and then, along with German entrepreneurs and settlers, spread to Eastern Europe. By the mid-nineteenth century, the religious revival had reached Łódź and stimulated a sort of religious competition among Protestant Germans, who had settled in the city from the 1820s onwards.

In areas where the revival took hold, religious zeal stimulated all parts of society and challenged the official churches. The established churches faced tremendous hurdles as industrialization and urbanization released people from the bonds of traditional society, shaping Christianity into something completely new. The traditional religious infrastructure was unable to cope. Neither the Church of England in Manchester nor the Roman Catholic or Protestant churches in Łódź were able to respond sufficiently to these new challenges. Already in 1844, Leon Faucher summarized the situation in this way: “In political opinions radicalism prevails. As to religious sects, the latest imported is generally the most acceptable. Manchester contains more Methodists, Quakers, and Independents, than adherents to the established church.”³⁸ This new competition among Christian groups, along with the perception of a rapidly progressing secularization, provoked assertive religious counter-actions. This tendency is clearly illustrated by Manchester’s Nonconformist movement, by Protestant evangelicalism among the German-speaking population of Łódź, and by the revival of long-forgotten rituals within the Catholic Church (for example, the cult of the Sacred Heart and new forms of mass pilgrimage). Yet despite this surge of religiosity and the proliferation of new churches, there is no proof of a “Second Confessional Era,” as the German historian Olaf Blaschke put it.³⁹ Objectively, church attendance dropped in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the revival created new religious spheres and stimulated Christians in their attempts to adjust to indus-

trialization and urbanization. Instead of a general secularization, this complex picture would be better described as a “new diversity.”

Everyday Life in an Urban Religious Environment

In the diverse religious environment of the nineteenth century, Christian churches and organizations did make a comeback in many European cities, especially the industrial cities of Western Europe, which, according to some studies, had a vibrant religious life. The groundbreaking work of Hugh McLeod, among others, has served as an initial model for further studies of British, German, and Swiss cities.⁴⁰ The general framework of Łódź and Manchester did not differ much from other industrial centers that scholars have discussed. Both cities were characterized by filthy streets, social tensions, and dangerous working conditions in the factories. Many poor people struggled constantly to maintain standards of cleanliness and order—to stay “decent” and “respectable”—in the face of the dirt and decay, the smells and the noise. Hugh McLeod points out that religion did more than help people to accept their suffering. It frequently led to three ways of ameliorating the situation, which could be mutually exclusive but were not necessarily so: individual self-help, neighborly support, and political action. The association between religion and self-improvement is a familiar theme in accounts of working-class people during this period. Savings banks at local parishes (both Protestant and Roman Catholic) were established. Under pastoral direction, saving took on a ritual character, and the correct performance of every detail of the “rite” reminded savers of the solemnity of what they were doing.

A vitally important means of self-improvement was education, and this involved workers with local churches. Sunday school, as Thomas Walter Laqueur argued, was mainly the creation of the Protestant working-class community, the product of the infinite inventiveness and ingenuity of men and women who, under the most adverse conditions, created a culture of discipline, self-respect, and improvement within which they could wage the battle for social justice and political equality.⁴¹ Sunday schools provided an unprecedented sphere of lay activity within the churches. Apart from the aim of recruiting future followers for the churches, Sunday schools maintained in their own right a

vital religious culture. Within both Anglicanism and Nonconformity, the Christianity of the Sunday schools certainly provided communal and spiritual support for the sick and dying, and teachers often spent as much time in the pastoral visitation of their charges as they did in evangelism and teaching. The schools also provided practical help and a comprehensive network of support structures, including societies for tending the sick and burying the dead. It is also important to remember that the same schools offered their pupils an entrance into a world of leisure with tea parties, treats, and outings.⁴² In 1867 Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth summed up the contribution of the Sunday schools to education: "Long before even enlightened statesmen and leaders of public opinion cared for the education of the people, the congregations had begun to work in the Sunday schools. When the Government first attempted to organize national education, it not only found its machinery ready to hand, but also found that the churches and congregations contained themselves the zeal and purpose as to public education."⁴³ Not surprisingly, Manchester and northwest England became the birthplace of the state education lobby, as Nonconformists campaigned for a rate-aided, locally controlled, non-sectarian education system.⁴⁴

Similar themes of hard work, cleanliness, and order emerge from accounts of the Jewish communities of Łódź and Manchester. Ideas of community and mutual responsibility were particularly strong and explicit among religiously active Jews of this period. Not only were there numerous charities supported by the more prosperous members of the Jewish communities of Łódź and Manchester, but the principle of mutual aid was also integral to the small synagogues formed by groups of immigrants in areas like Manchester's Cheetham Hill or Łódź-Bałuty. These communities were based not so much on the fact that the members were all Jews, or that they were neighbors, as on the fact that they were Jews coming from the same towns in Europe. In this way, the community of mutual obligation was narrowed down, while the sense of obligation to those within the communities was very strong. In particular, the newly arrived immigrant could expect a bed in the home of a *landsman*.⁴⁵

As Hugh McLeod described in his analysis of working-class piety, places of worship were among the few environments in which the sexes did mix to some extent. Indeed, some people went to church precisely for that reason. Nonetheless, plenty of religious activities were orga-

nized on a single-sex basis. Organizations or events for women tended to attract more participants than those for men. And where men did take an interest in religion, the aspects that interested them were often different from those that drew women.⁴⁶ For instance, men were interested in sectarian conflict. Certainly, fathers were accustomed to making life hell for those of their children who chose a marriage partner from the wrong faith. Protestants tended to feel degraded by the admission of a Catholic into the family, and Catholics felt betrayed when one of their number married a Protestant.⁴⁷ Women, in turn, took the leading role in those areas of religious life that related to the home, to the upbringing of children, and to rituals connected with the annual cycle or the life cycle. Sometimes this was a matter of an accepted division of labor. For instance, mothers taught their children prayers because prayers were conventionally said before going to bed, and mothers generally put the younger children to bed. On the other hand, prayers of all sorts seem to have been said more frequently by women than by men. This was probably because the help of God was frequently sought in those areas of life that were least humanly controllable, and most of these fell within the sphere of female responsibility. Also, social conventions that made any public display of emotion by men taboo may have made it much more difficult for men to pray in front of others, except in formal contexts.⁴⁸

During the religious revival, Protestant preachers promoted the virtue of "respectability" in order to combat irreligious tendencies within working-class communities.⁴⁹ Education and moral improvement were particularly important and became closely linked with the search for respectability. In the chaotic conditions of fast-growing industrial villages and working-class suburbs, churches and chapels were often strongholds of this respectable working class. In Britain, at least, the desire for respectability and a repudiation of rough habits of life were often major concerns of working-class churchgoers, and a strong attraction of church life seemed to be that it offered an orderly, self-respecting, and independent style of life.⁵⁰

Though rarely researched, the same motivation applied to the religiously active citizens of Łódź. Of course, the situation there was different in many respects. It was an entirely artificial city, founded in Poland mostly by Germans and Jews. In Łódź, people pursuing respectability in society could not rely on a developed system of churches and

chapels; everything was still in constant flux until 1914, and even beyond that date. But there is strong evidence that Protestants and Jews who became actively involved in community life, including establishing charities, were moved by similar ideas of respectability. For instance, the *Christliche Wohltätigkeitsverein*, a mostly German-speaking and Protestant institution, maintained a huge network of charitable enterprises. Apart from providing orphanages (the *Evangelisches Waisenhaus*, set up in 1888), a shelter for the homeless, institutions for the disabled, and hospitals (for instance, the *Haus der Barmherzigkeit*, founded in 1904), it also promoted social respectability on a more grassroots level with garden parties, charitable bazaars, a station missionary, and so on.⁵¹ For Jews coming to Łódź, the encounter between the urban environment and traditional values brought from their home communities served to stimulate religious life. The number of Jewish prayer houses for specific feasts continued to grow until the turn of the century, and religious participation provided assistance and comfort in the rapidly growing city.⁵² However, unlike comparable groups in Manchester, the Germans and Jews remained linguistically distinct from their Polish neighbors. Around 1900, only 4 percent of Jews in Łódź spoke Polish at home, and only 1 percent spoke German. The overwhelming majority of Jews, regardless of their social status, remained in the Yiddish-speaking world of the *shtetl*, from which they had come to Łódź.⁵³ This linguistic separation prevented municipal activities among all ethnic groups and left charitable activities to the separate religious communities.

The desire for respectability could also be seen as a motive for religious participation among the Protestant and Jewish entrepreneur circles of Łódź, whereas similar tendencies among Polish Catholics are not as evident. The ethical norms of German Protestant entrepreneurs surprised the Russian authorities, even though they had previously recruited foreign business-owners. A report of a Russian Investigation Commission from 1885, which aimed to uncover the national unreliability of German businessmen in Łódź, came to the conclusion that parallels the profile of a Mancunian entrepreneur:

The Łódź businessman is not simply owner of his factory, but a person who is familiar with even the banalities of his business. He lives close to his premises, supervises the entire manufacturing

process, and is informed about everything, even if there are managers in the bigger companies. He follows the news of his profession abroad very closely, orders as soon as he hears of better or more efficient machines, regardless of whether his own machines are still in good shape. The majority of Łódź businessmen owe their present situation to their own labor. Quite a few started their careers as simple workers themselves. Zealously, and by extremely limiting their personal needs, they climbed until they reached the desired position of independent businessman. Interestingly, despite the great wealth they have earned, they stick to the old customs and dedicate themselves to twelve hours per day, entering the factory first and leaving the premises last. From outside, one sometimes can hardly distinguish them from ordinary workers.⁵⁴

In what ways did this new Christian value of respectability shape everyday life in the community? A striking example of how Christians changed their perception of social issues and responsibilities was the development during the third quarter of the century, especially among Nonconformists, of the ideal of the “civic gospel.” In practical terms, the proponents of the civic gospel preached that the local government, if efficient, public-spirited, and directed to the well-being of the community as a whole, could bring immense benefit to municipal life. In Birmingham during the 1870s and 1880s, the government implemented new provisions for sewage disposal; new measures to promote public health; a municipal takeover of the gas and water companies; a major scheme of town improvement and slum clearance; and the opening of a municipal museum, an art gallery, and other educational and cultural facilities. It was, in short, a variety of civic “gas and water socialism.” The civic gospel of mid-Victorian England was, of course, the product of a number of influences, not least among them the wider ambitions of local radical and liberal politicians. But much of the energy, vitality, zeal, and idealism of the civic gospel in Birmingham and Manchester came specifically from the powerful and influential middle-class Nonconformist community.⁵⁵ One of the leading early proponents was Birmingham Congregational minister R.W. Dale, whose finest expression of the civic gospel’s principles was found in a collection of sermons entitled *The Laws of Christ for the Common Life*. The collection was centered on the assertion that Christian morality is relevant

to everyday life, and that commercial, municipal and political activities are sacred activities. Dale addressed the civic gospel directly in the sermon "Political and Municipal Duty." The churches, he asserted, would never be able to remedy the evils of urban social conditions without the additional actions of municipal authorities. Medicine and municipal action, Dale argued, and not the gospel alone, were necessary to cure the sick and improve the homes of the poor. Yet despite their great esteem for civil authority, the determination with which Dale and other evangelicals sought to build the Jerusalem of municipal welfare and moral and social reformation from the elements of industrial society received its fire from a confident Christian faith.⁵⁶

One more distinction between religiosity in the English and Polish industrial centers was that the ideology of the civic gospel never quite reached Eastern Europe. This was due in particular to the lack of a developed civil society, as Łódź was part of the Russian Empire and was treated by Russian authorities as an occupied territory. Religious organizations, as well as political and social ones, always needed approval from the Russian authorities, which was especially hard for Polish Catholics to obtain because they were constantly suspected of plotting rebellion against the Russian partition powers. In Łódź, any civic initiative was led by German Protestants and Jews, whereas only a few German Catholics contributed to the development of a civic spirit. Religious groups established charitable services for the urban community, but they were unable to effect the same kind of broader political and social reforms that Christians accomplished in England.

Nevertheless, the church penumbra provided a range of benefits to people of all social strata in the new industrial centers of Europe East and West. The cities were urban mission fields, and the churches there were motivated by both denominational competitiveness and a concern for the moral health and general stability of the new industrial society. Of course, the churches and the new religious organizations were also driven by an evangelical concern to share with their neighbors the perceived benefits, both moral and spiritual, of a personal relationship with God, and thus to secure their eternal destiny. But these blessings were also accompanied by more tangible advantages. Religious participation brought respectability. Churchgoers were often encouraged to take steps toward self-improvement. And involvement with a religious group provided a sense of community in the constantly changing en-

vironment of the nineteenth-century industrial city. Often a merciless animosity existed among these communities. Yet church attendance and piety did contribute enormously to civilizing urban society.⁵⁷

Summary

For a long time, historians have agreed that the working class in most parts of Europe was extensively secularized in the nineteenth century, and the controversy lay mainly in the reasons for that secularization. Recently, however, many historians, especially in Britain, have challenged this view. Hugh McLeod suggests that a higher percentage of the working class participated in church and chapel than had previously been recognized. And Callum Brown and Mark Smith have gone considerably further in revising upward the estimated levels of working-class churchgoing and church membership. Meanwhile, Jeffrey Cox and Sarah Williams have argued that non-churchgoing working-class people were not less religious than middle-class churchgoers, but religious in different ways.⁵⁸ The European industrial cities can best be understood, in Hugh McLeod's words, as "half-secular" societies in which few people had a wholly secular view of the world. While the social role of churches was more restricted than in earlier times and, in principle, people were able to live without any reference to religion, in practice the churches entered people's lives at many points.

On one level, Christian rites remained, according to Hugh McLeod, part of the daily experience even of those who did not regard themselves as religious. Churches continued to preside over private rites of passage, giving them an easy advantage over secular alternatives. The popular culture of both East and West European countries in the second half of the nineteenth century was saturated with symbols, rituals, and beliefs drawn ultimately from Christianity. They colored the new diversity of pious and impious alike and shaped much of the environment within which even the declared unbeliever had to live.⁵⁹ But the emergence of industrialization and urbanization in a free market in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries affected all areas of life, including the traditions of organized religion. This transformation represented one of the greatest challenges faced by the Christian church over its long history, and the response of the churches

to urbanization was more plural and creative than quantitative measurements suggest, showing that the age of mature industrial capitalism was imbued with a powerful and comprehensive religious and moral dimension. Religion, a constitutive element of people's personal lives, helped them orient themselves in times of fundamental changes, and its social functions provided reassurance in times of crisis. Łódź and Manchester were both testing grounds for pastoral initiatives, as well as foci of de-Christianization and secularization. Both cities displayed the failure of the established churches and the rise of new religious movements. The latter succeeded in addressing the new religious and social needs of two new classes: the industrial laborers and the businessmen. In the second half of the nineteenth century, industrial society looked for social and intellectual responses to the challenges of the modern world. Christianity (and, as we have seen, Judaism) gained new cultural spheres and social spaces in the industrial cities and generated a new, religiously motivated spirit, which, along with the economic dynamism of the time, contributed to the myth connected to Manchester and Łódź.

But the religious implications of the onset of rapid industrialization and urbanization, beginning in Britain and reaching Poland in the mid-nineteenth century, also had a problematic side. The massive migration of people from rural areas to towns and industrial regions presented the churches with major logistical problems which, at least in the short term, were largely unsolvable. When waves of new immigrants moved to these "Promised Lands," they experienced disorientation and even deprivation because most inhabitants had no kin within the city. Religion provided a social framework that eased social hardships and offered support in a familiar, religious environment. At the same time, though, this great mixing of populations from different religious and ethnic backgrounds often led to a close intertwining of ethnic and religious identities that enhanced people's religious awareness, and sometimes, as in the cases of both Łódź and Manchester, led to bitter sectarian conflict. At the time, there were no established political, social, or religious boundaries in the industrial cities, which created opportunities for the adherents of the new religious groups. The Manchester Unitarians experienced a long history of discrimination, but they eventually saw many rich and educated Radicals among their members. Surely their contribution as genuinely progressive entrepre-

neurs has been overrated, but this community did have a decisive influence on the city. This is parallel to German Protestant entrepreneurs in Łódź. For these factory owners and their workers, church attendance, whether by compulsion or voluntarily, granted a new respectability. Moreover, religion provided a sense of community. Church attendance and personal piety boosted urban integration and granted social recognition and acceptance. In many respects, religiosity contributed to modernity in urban spaces. In the case of the civic gospel movement, for instance, religion was the driving force regulating industrial society.

An English hymn summarized exactly the ambitions and desires of Christians in the nineteenth-century industrial cities: “And Was Jerusalem Built Here?” Not self-pity, but engaging communal activities were required for building the New Jerusalem. Many people were essential, leading to the development of a multitude of voluntary bodies. Although more research needs to be done, it is clear that in Łódź, as in Manchester, religious associations and churches exercised considerable influence on urban society.

In considering the role of religion in the nineteenth-century city, I have attempted to establish a framework within which the new diversity of these industrial cities can be explained. Conventional wisdom associates the nineteenth-century European city with rapid secularization. But this is an oversimplification in several respects. First, the contrast drawn at the time between the “religious countryside” and “irreligious city” (such as Władysław Reymont’s distinction between an idealized Polish countryside and the demonic industrial giant of Łódź) is misleading. The salient feature of urban religious life was—as Hugh McLeod argued—not secularism but pluralism. Furthermore, the range of different types of religious practice in the rural regions of any country could be enormous, and oftentimes included the extreme of collective non-practice. The degree of variation among the cities of any country was usually much less.⁶⁰

Apart from addressing the challenges—even the crisis—that European churches faced in the nineteenth century, the historian of industrial urban society should certainly acknowledge the religious revival. Even a brief comparative study of the social history of cities in two different European regions shows how flawed the secularization thesis is. Both cities—Łódź and Manchester—revealed new forms of religiosity and piety, which gradually adjusted to a new environment

formed by the industrial revolution and the rise of the working class. Churches did experience decline and crisis, change and revival. These structural changes and the broader transformation of Christianity and the churches in European society and culture must be underlined. By the beginning of World War II, religion had changed fundamentally. Industrial cities created a new environment that provided for a wide range of religious—and irreligious—diversity. The constant arrival of migrants, the poverty and deprivation they encountered, and their desire for community and respectability, all contributed to a competition among religious and non-religious groups. This diversity could be inspiring, and it could be turbulent. Whether contributing to the development of beneficial communities or divisive sects, the new religious diversity was a vital factor in the modern European city.

NOTES

- 1 This chapter owes much to the inspiring and groundbreaking research done by Hugh McLeod: *Piety and Poverty: Working-Class Religion in Berlin, London and New York, 1870–1914* (New York and London: Holmes & Meier, 1996); *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848–1914* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000); and *European Religion in the Age of the Great Cities, 1830–1930* (London: Routledge, 1995). By contrast, see Standish Meacham, *A Life Apart: The English Working Class, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 15–16, 26, 53, 120, 164–165, and 199–200. His work makes a few references to religion, but only to dismiss the subject as peripheral.
- 2 Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845; reprint, Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1958), 141.
- 3 B.I. Coleman, *The Idea of the City in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1973), 97.
- 4 Quoted in C. Aspin, *The First Industrial Society: Lancashire, 1750–1850* (Preston, UK: Carnegie, 1995), 152.
- 5 Callum Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (London: Methuen, 1987), 141.
- 6 Alan Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740–1914* (London: Longman, 1976); Alan Gilbert, *The Making of Post-Christian Britain* (London: Longman, 1980); Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert, and Lee Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977); Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society* (London: Watts, 1966); Steve Bruce, ed., *Religion and Modernization* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992).

- 7 Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, 110–115, 145–148, and 184–187.
- 8 Callum Brown, “Did Urbanization Secularize Britain?” *Urban History Yearbook* 15 (1988): 1–14.
- 9 Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, “Religious Economies and Sacred Canopies: Religious Mobilization in American Cities, 1906,” *American Sociological Review* 53 (1988), 41–49.
- 10 See the inspiring works of Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, “Religion in Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sozialhistorische Perspektiven für die vergleichende Erforschung religiöser Mentalitäten und Milieus” in Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, eds., *Religion im Kaiserreich: Milieus–Mentalitäten–Krisen* (Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1996): 7–56; Hartmut Lehmann, *Protestantisches Christentum im Prozeß der Säkularisierung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001); and Wolfgang Schieder, ed., *Religion und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1993).
- 11 This article is part of a larger project by the author at the German Historical Institute Warsaw.
- 12 Benjamin Disraeli, *Coningsby or the New Generation* (1844; reprint, London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1889) 155. For views of nineteenth-century Manchester in fiction, see Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (1854; reprint, London: Macmillan, 1995); Elizabeth Gaskell, *Mary Barton: A Tale of Manchester Life* (1848; reprint, London: Penguin, 1996); and Elizabeth Gaskell, *Wives and Daughters* (1866; reprint, London: Penguin, 1996).
- 13 Leon Faucher, *Manchester in 1844* (London and Manchester: Abel Heywood, 1844), 16.
- 14 Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 4 (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975), 347–374.
- 15 Quoted in Malcolm Bee, *Industrial Revolution and Social Reform in the Manchester Region* (Manchester: Neil Richardson, 1997), 7.
- 16 Władysław St. Reymont, *Das Gelobte Land* (Leipzig: Sammlung Dieterich, 1984), 10.
- 17 Arthur Rubinstein, *Erinnerungen: Die frühen Jahre* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1997), 13.
- 18 This becomes very evident in Reymont’s novel *Peasants*, for which he received the Nobel Prize in 1924. Reymont clearly idealizes the old Polish noble republic, which was based on a peaceful rural community, whereas the industrial giant Łódź was seen as a threat to the Polish nation’s customs and soul.
- 19 Michał Arct, *Słownik wyrazów obcych* (Warsaw: Wydaw. M. Arcta, 1937), 180.
- 20 Oskar Eugen Kossmann, *Łódź. Eine historisch-geographische Analyse* (Würzburg: Holzner, 1966), 158.
- 21 Alan Kidd, *Manchester* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), 14.
- 22 All numbers based on E. Alan Rose, “Church and Chapel in Manchester 1847–1914,” in Chris Ford, Michael Powell, and Terry Wyke, eds.,

- The Church in Cottonopolis* (Manchester: Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society, 1997), 195 and 196. See also the original *Parliamentary Papers* 1852/53, LXXXIX, Census, 1851: Religious Worship (England and Wales), Summary Tables for Manchester and Salford. On the interpretation of the census, see also D.M. Thompson, "The Religious Census of 1851," in R. Lawton, ed., *The Census and Social Structure* (London: Frank Cass, 1979).
- 23 See also studies on the Irish: Michael Herbert, *The Wearing of the Green: A Political History of the Irish in Manchester* (London: Irish in Britain Representation Group, 2001); Mary J. Hickman, *Religion, Class and Identity: The State, the Catholic Church and the Education of the Irish in Britain* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995); W.J. Lowe, *The Irish in Mid-Victorian Lancashire: The Shaping of a Working Class Community* (New York: P. Lang, 1989); Sheridan Gilley, "English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780–1900," in Colin Holmes, ed., *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978): 81–110.
- 24 Zimmermann, *Die Zeit der Metropolen*, 61.
- 25 Hartmut Berghoff, *Englische Unternehmer, 1870–1914: Eine Kollektivbiographie führender Wirtschaftsbürger in Birmingham, Bristol und Manchester* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 72. On the Germans, see also Su Coates, "Manchester's German Gentlemen: Immigrant Institutions in a Provincial City 1840–1920," *Manchester Region History Review* 5 (1991/1992): 21–30; Rainer Liedtke: "'...deutsche Geisteskultur zu fördern': Deutsch-jüdische Immigranten und die Schiller-Anstalt in Manchester," *Tribüne* 29 (1990): 146–153; and S.D.F. Thomas, "Some Aspects of the German Community in Manchester circa 1870–1920" (Manchester University, 1980).
- 26 *Manchester Guardian*, July 4, 1888.
- 27 Figures approx. given for 1825: 275; 1850: 1,000; 1875: 3,000; 1900: 20,000; 1950: 50,000; 1995: 30,000. Figures from: Albert Radcliffe, "Christians and Jews in Manchester" in *The Church in Cottonopolis*, 207. On Manchester Jewry, see Bill Williams, *The Making of Manchester Jewry, 1740–1875* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985).
- 28 N.J. Frangopulo, "Foreign Communities in Victorian Manchester," *Manchester Review* 10 (1965), 189–206; and N.J. Frangopulo, *Rich Inheritance: A Guide to the History of Manchester* (Wakefield: S.R. Publishers, 1969).
- 29 For examples of the German historiography, see Otto Heike, *Die Aufbauleistung rheinischer Textilpioniere in Mittelpolen* (Neuß: Verlag Gesellschaft für Buchdruckerei, 1964). One of the most balanced studies is Kossmann, *Łódź. Eine historisch-geographische Analyse*. For works published before 1989 in Poland, see, among others: B. Baranowski and J. Fijałek, eds., *Łódź—Dzieje miasta*, vol. 1, *Do 1918 r.* (Warsaw/Łódź: PWN, 1988); Julian Janczak, *Ludność Łodzi przemysłowej 1820–1914* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1982).

After the political changes some major studies appeared. See Jürgen Hensel, ed., *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Łódź 1820–1939. Eine schwierige*

- Nachbarschaft* (Osnabrück: Fibre, 1999); Krzysztof Kuczyński and Barbara Ratecka, eds., *Niemcy w dziejach Łodzi do 1945 roku* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2001); Stefan Pytlaś, *Łódzka burżuazja przemysłowa w latach 1864–1914* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1994). Some studies on Łódź Jewry have also been published: François Guesnet, *Łódźer Juden im 19. Jahrhundert. Ihr Ort in einer multi-kulturellen Stadtgesellschaft* (Leipzig: Simon-Dubnow-Institut für Jüdische Geschichte und Kultur, 1997); and Wiesław Puś, *Żydzi w Łodzi w latach zaborów 1793–1914* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 2000).
- 30 For example, see Marek Budziarek, Leszek Skrzydło, and Marek Szukalak, *Łódź—nasze miasto/Łódź—unsere Stadt* (Łódź: Oficyna Bibliofilów, 2000); and Marek Budziarek and Małgorzata Laurentowicz, *Triada: trzy wielkie społeczności: Polacy—Niemcy—Żydzi* (Łódź: Muzeum Historii Miasta Łodzi, 2001).
 - 31 The historiography of Manchester is immense. For an orientation, the following bibliography is helpful: T.J. Wyke, "Nineteenth Century Manchester: A Preliminary Bibliography," in Alan J. Kidd and K.W. Roberts, eds., *City, Class and Culture: Studies of Social Policy and Cultural Production in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 218–271. Only some selected works concerning Manchester can be cited here: Alan J. Kidd, "Introduction: The Middle Class in Nineteenth-Century Manchester," in *City, Class and Culture*, 1–24; and Alan J. Kidd, *Manchester* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002). For important aspects of the nineteenth century, see Mary B. Rose, *The Lancashire Cotton Industry: A History since 1700* (Preston/Oxford: Lancashire County Books, 1996); Gary S. Messinger, *Manchester in the Victorian Age: The Half-Known City* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); Trevor Griffiths, *The Lancashire Working Classes: c. 1880–1930* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001); Aspin, *The First Industrial Society*; and Peter Shapely, *Charity and Power in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester: Smith Settle, The Chetham Society, 2000).
 - 32 Berghoff, *Englische Unternehmer 1870–1914*, 53.
 - 33 Rosa Luxemburg, "Die industrielle Entwicklung Polens" (1898), in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 1, 1893–1905, part 1 ([East] Berlin: Dietz, 1972).
 - 34 Donald A. Kerr, ed., *Religion, State and Ethnic Groups: Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe 1850–1940*, vol. 2 (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1992); Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm, 1974); Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Society in England, 1850–1914* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996); Frederick Michael L. Thompson, *Gentrification and the Enterprise Culture: Britain, 1780–1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Chris S. Ford, *Pastors and Polemicists: The Character of Popular Anglicanism in South-East Lancashire, 1847–1914* (Manchester: Smith Settle, The Chetham Society, 2002); Gerald Parsons, ed., *Religion in Victorian Britain*, vol. 1, *Traditions* (Manchester: Manchester University

- Press, 1988), and vol. 2, *Controversies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); and S.J.D. Green, "Religion in Industrial Societies: The North of England since c. 1750," *Northern History* 33 (1997): 238–258.
- 35 Peter Wende, *Geschichte Englands*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1995), 220.
 - 36 Kurt Kluxen, *Geschichte Englands: von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1991), 526.
 - 37 Ibid., 527.
 - 38 Faucher, *Manchester in 1844*.
 - 39 Olaf Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?" *Geschichte und Gegenwart* 1 (2000): 38–75.
 - 40 Hugh McLeod's work includes the already cited *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848–1914*; *Piety and Poverty: Working-Class Religion in Berlin, London and New York, 1870–1914*; and (as editor) *European Religion in the Age of the Great Cities, 1830–1930*; as well as *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789–1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997). Case studies on British cities include Callum Brown's work on Scotland: Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800–2000* (London: Routledge, 2001); *The People in the Pews: Religion and Society in Scotland since 1780* (Glasgow: Economic and Social History Society of Scotland, 1993); and *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707*. On the London borough of Lambeth, see Jeffrey Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth, 1870–1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Among others, see J.N. Morris, *Religion and Urban Change: Croydon 1840–1914* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 1992); A.C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk: Victorian Scotland's Religious Revolution* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1983); Chris Ford, *The Church in Cottonopolis and Pastors and Polemicists*; S.J.D. Green, *Religion in the Age of Decline: Organisation and Experience in Industrial Yorkshire, 1870–1920* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Rainer Liedtke, *Jewish Welfare in Hamburg and Manchester, c. 1850–1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Mark Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society: Oldham and Saddleworth 1740–1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); K.D.M. Snell, *Church and Chapel in the North Midlands: Religious Observance in the Nineteenth Century* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991); and A.M. Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale: Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, 1780–1865* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990). More generally on Britain, see Timothy Jenkins, *Religion in English Everyday Life: An Ethnographic Approach* (New York: Berghahn, 1999).

On the German case, see Blaschke and Kuhleemann, "Religion in Geschichte und Gesellschaft"; Frank-Michael Kuhleemann, *Bürgerlichkeit und Religion: Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte der evangelischen Pfarrer in Baden 1860–1914* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001); and Dietmar von Reeken, *Kirchen im Umbruch zur Moderne: Milieubildungsprozesse im nordwestdeutschen Protestantismus 1849–1914* (Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1999). And on the Swiss town of Basel, see Thomas K. Kuhn and Martin

- Sallmann, eds., *Das "Fromme Basel": Religion in einer Stadt des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Basel: Schwabe, 2002).
- 41 Thomas Walter Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability. Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780–1850* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 241–245.
- 42 Smith, *Religion in Industrial Society*, 258.
- 43 Aspin, *The First Industrial Society*, 151.
- 44 E. Alan Rose, "Church and Chapel in Manchester," 204.
- 45 See Rickie Burman, "Women in Jewish Religious Life: Manchester 1880–1930," in Jim Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper, and Raphael Samuel, eds., *Disciplines of Faith: Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy* (London: Routledge, 1987), 37–54.
- 46 McLeod, *Piety and Poverty*, 152.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 154.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 156–157.
- 49 See Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability*.
- 50 McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe*, 80–81.
- 51 Erich Dietrich and Otto Heike, *Wege der Evangelisch-Ausburgischen Kirche in Polen. Zum 150. Jahrestag der Gründung der ersten evangelischen Gemeinden und 50. Jahrestag der Einweihung der St. Matthäi-Kirche in Łódź* (Düsseldorf: Hilfskomitee der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Deutschen aus Polen, 1978), 14–15.
- 52 Francois Guesnet, "Das Verhältnis von Juden und Deutschen im Spiegel ihrer Organisationen im Łódź des 19. Jahrhunderts," in *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Łódź*, 157.
- 53 Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, "Auf dem Weg zur Bürgergesellschaft. Modernisierungsprozesse in Łódź (1820–1914)," in *Polen, Deutsche und Juden in Łódź*, 123.
- 54 Rudolf Kornacker, "Karl Scheibler und seine Stadt Łódź," *Der Kulturwart* 197 (1994): 12–13.
- 55 For the Birmingham example, see Parsons, *Religion in Victorian Britain*, vol. 2, *Controversies*, 46–47. An example of Nonconformist local power can be seen in Manchester. The militant Nonconformists came largely from Unitarian and Congregationalist backgrounds and had the necessary wealth and self-confidence to challenge the town's Tory establishment in the 1830s. The Liberals dominated the City Council for twenty years after 1838. The statistic that ten of the first twenty-eight mayors came from Cross Street Chapel speaks for itself. See E. Alan Rose, "Church and Chapel in Manchester," 198.
- 56 Parsons, *Religion in Victorian Britain*, vol. 2, *Controversies*, 47–48.
- 57 Aspin, *The First Industrial Society*, 152. On Sunday schools, see Laqueur, *Religion and Respectability*.
- 58 McLeod, *Piety and Poverty*, 206. For further bibliographical notes, see footnote 40.
- 59 McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe*, 251.
- 60 McLeod, *Piety and Poverty*, 208.

Christianity, Nation, State

The Case of Christian Hungary

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Christian symbols dominated the public life of Hungary between the two world wars. During these years, a Catholic feast day—St. István's Day—became the most important national holiday. Every August 20, priests carried Catholic Hungary's most sacred relic—the holy right hand of Hungary's first king and patron saint, István—through the streets of Budapest in a splendid sacral procession. At the same time Hungary's political leaders made innumerable speeches praising István's legacy as a Christian ruler. But public invocations of Christianity were not only holiday fare in post-World War I Hungary. After the defeat in the war, the loss of roughly two-thirds of Hungarian territory in the peace settlements, and two disruptive revolutions, counter-revolutionary politicians and public intellectuals insisted that Christian values were essential to Hungary's recovery. They maintained that Hungarians, shattered and humiliated, needed to remember a fundamental truth: Hungary was a Christian nation. Hungarians, they argued, had lost sight of this truth in the decades before the war and invited disaster. Only by embracing Christianity again could the nation beat back the destructive forces of revolution, regain its sense of purpose, and make the country whole again. In a reconstructed Christian Hungary, Christian values would again dominate national life.

Hungary's Christian religious leaders enthusiastically joined the chorus of public figures calling for a vigorous Christianity in national public life. Hungary's Catholic clergy proudly took part in St. István's Day festivities. On many other public occasions, Catholic and Protestant clergy stood side-by-side with secular politicians and embodied the new fusion of Christianity and nationalism. Church leaders also took satisfaction in the crucial role that religion played in the edu-

cational life of the country. A sizable number of elementary and secondary schools, including some of the best educational institutions in Hungary, were run by Hungary's churches. But Christian leaders also believed that Christian Hungary should mean something more than festive inspirational pomp and right-minded curriculum development. In the new climate of religious nationalism, they dared to hope that faith might transform public life. For decades, leading Christian figures had criticized liberal lawmakers for wanting to expand the scope of secular civil law. This had, they lamented, contributed to the growth of religious indifference and even unbelief in Hungary. They also resented the mainstream media for spreading images of consumer desires and individual passions that so directly contradicted Christian teachings on family, sexuality, and materialistic temptation. Christian nationalism promised a chance to fight these trends and perhaps even replace them with a public culture defined by, rather than against, Christian faith.

According to census statistics, however, Christian Hungary was a fiction. Perhaps one could say that about 94 percent of Hungarians were Christian, inasmuch as census takers in 1920 had counted slightly more than 470,000 of Hungary's citizens as Jews (just under 6 percent of the total population). But no amount of Christian patriotism could obscure the fact that Hungary was a confessionally divided society. Roman Catholics, constituting about 64 percent of the population, were by far the largest Christian confession, while Calvinists, members of Hungary's Reformed Church, represented 21 percent of the population. Slightly over 6 percent were Lutherans. Small communities of Greek Catholics, Unitarians, and Baptists comprised the rest of the "Christian Hungarian" population. Though several centuries of migration and settlement had blurred Hungary's confessional map considerably, it was still possible to say that Catholics were most numerous in the west and southwest, whereas Calvinists, the largest Protestant denomination, were predominant in the eastern part of the country. A number of tensions flowed from this confessional heterogeneity. The Roman Catholic Church, in addition to being the largest church, was also the wealthiest, as the Church was one of the largest landholders in Hungary. Consequently, the Roman Catholic Church was, in many ways, the most socially and culturally powerful Christian confession. However, Protestants in Hungary could look back on 400 years of history and innumerable episodes in which they, and not their Catho-

lic rivals, were the most ardent champions of national independence. Although large and culturally important communities of Hungarian Protestants now lived as minorities in neighboring states, especially in Romanian-controlled Transylvania, Hungary's Protestant churches retained a degree of social prominence out of proportion to their numerical size. Thus demographically, Hungary was a unified Christian nation only in the most superficial sense.¹

Throughout the interwar years, religious and secular figures struggled to give the vision of "Christian Hungary" concrete meaning. So easily proclaimed after World War I, the substance of a "Christian Hungary" or "Christian nationalism" became elusive the more carefully one considered it. What did it mean to say that Hungary was a Christian state? Or that Hungary was a Christian nation? Were these two things the same, or were there important differences between them? The interwar Hungarian government might mobilize religious sentiments and symbols to promote their policies. It might even govern on behalf of a Christian nation and make that entity the object of its policy-making. But did that strengthen Christianity as a faith? Or would it only contribute to the growing power of the secular state? In his influential work on political religion, Emilio Gentile ably describes the dangers faced by Hungary's Christian leaders. In the modern era, he argues, politics has become sacralized. Having "taken over the religious dimension" of life, it has become the "core of an elaborate system of beliefs, myths, values, commandments, rituals, and symbols, and consequently an object of faith, reverence, veneration, loyalty and devotion for which, if necessary, people are willing to sacrifice their lives."² Politics, in short, exists to inspire faith in the political community (the nation), rather than faith in God. Translated into the Hungarian context, the question can be put starkly: Would Christian nationalism in Hungary simply absorb Christianity, make use of its symbols and histories, and then ultimately replace it? If that were the case, then the idea of "Christian Hungary" would result not in the revival of religion in public life but in the further secularization of Hungarian society.

Hungary's Catholic and Protestant churches tried to avoid this outcome. Activists from both churches insisted that nationalism did not have to replace or marginalize religion in Hungary. Nor did a modern nation have to be secular. Instead, Hungary's Christian leaders ar-

gued for a more symbiotic relationship between religion and nation. Religious symbols and sentiments could strengthen national feeling, while patriotism could lead Hungarians back to their faith. In this way, they hoped to create a truly religious nationalism.³ This essay will examine this proposition and explore the place of Christianity in Christian Hungary.

Initially, the idea of “Christian Hungary” was not a program for religious politics, but rather a secular vision among middling Magyar nobles in the 1880s. With positions in Hungary’s county diets and provincial administration, these lesser gentry nobles had long been accustomed to thinking of themselves as Hungary’s “national” class. By the 1880s, changes in the global agricultural market began to expose these landholders to the rigors of international competition. Many found themselves facing debt or bankruptcy and increasingly dependent on creditors in Budapest. Liberalism, with its vision of free markets and open economic competition, promised little help. To the nobles it only worsened the blow that many of the most prominent men in Hungary’s new financial-services industry were assimilated Jews. In response, a small but vocal minority of these hard-pressed nobles began to embrace antisemitic politics, finding in the question of Jewish assimilation a “cultural code” that could express their worries about a much broader range of social issues.⁴ This cash-strapped class of provincial elites was a confessionally mixed group, many of whom were utterly indifferent to religion. For all of them, however, Christianity was not faith or a system of moral values. Instead, it was a powerful symbol of everything not Jewish. For this reason, these “new conservatives” called insistently for the defense of “Christian Hungary” against the predations of “Jewish power.”⁵ A few, led by the political adventurer Győző Istóczy, even formed a short-lived Antisemitic Party in the early 1880s, with the sole purpose of pushing an anti-Jewish and “pro-Christian” legislative agenda in Parliament. Though organized political antisemitism collapsed by the end of the decade, the movement did have an impact. At the turn of the century, it was not uncommon for members of the cash-strapped provincial elite to describe the effects of global capital on Habsburg Hungary’s largely agricultural economy as the machinations of an alien “Jewish power” intent on eroding the nation’s sovereignty.⁶ “Christian Hungary,” by contrast, stood as the symbol of an alternate future in which the country might benefit from technological advances

while remaining immune to the destabilizing (and foreign-seeming) social transformations that always seemed to accompany them.

Yet not every critique of liberalism was economic; nor was every vision of a “Christian” alternative so thoroughly secular. At roughly the same time, in the early 1890s, a dispute erupted between the liberal political establishment and the Catholic Church about the position of the Church within civil law. Although many of the details of the Hungarian *Kulturkampf* were technical, involving the regulation of baptismal and marriage registries, the fracas soon became a full-scale confrontation over the role that religion should play in the nation’s civic culture.⁷ Much as in the other culture wars between liberal states and the Catholic Church that broke out across nineteenth-century Europe, Hungarian liberals insisted that all Hungarian citizens must acknowledge the supremacy of civil law over religious faith for the sake of national unity. Hungary’s political leaders did not go so far as to call for a complete separation of church and state, even if many of them wanted to; the country’s complicated constitutional position as one half of the Catholic Habsburg monarchy made this a tricky proposition politically. But Hungary’s ruling elite insisted that in a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state like Hungary, only the state and its laws could guarantee the survival of a cohesive and productive society. To realize this ideal, they introduced bills establishing civil marriage and elevating Judaism as a religion to a status equivalent to that enjoyed in law by the largest Christian confessions. (Jews, as individuals, had enjoyed civil equality since 1868.)

Hungary’s Catholic bishops, supported by a new and increasingly vigorous Catholic public, recoiled from these measures. As their opposition gathered steam, they declared the proposed laws a direct assault on their religious beliefs and a clear sign that alien liberal values had become hegemonic in Hungary. In their view, religious equality was not a neutral proposition. Instead, it was part of an ideology of religious indifference or relativism with no ties whatsoever to Hungarian national culture. A leading figure on the Episcopal Bench, Lőrinc Schlauch, bishop of Székesfehérvár, made precisely this point in parliamentary debate. For him, Hungary was a nation historically rooted in the Christian tradition. Casting this legacy aside and declaring the state officially neutral towards all religions and creeds was in fact a dangerous expansion of state power into religious questions and implied that

an insidious “cosmopolitanism” had crept into Hungarian life, making a godless relativism the highest law in the land.⁸ It fell to Christian Hungarians to demand that their leaders oppose this moral decay. Others were less circumspect and denounced the “cosmopolitanism” that Bishop Schlauch saw as clear evidence of an alien “Jewish” morality eroding Christian civilization in Hungary.⁹ The religious-political disputes that occasioned this angry rhetoric exhausted themselves after several years. By 1895, civil marriage and a rough approximation of religious equality between Judaism and the various Christian churches were the law of the land. But religious resistance to secular lawmakers, as well as the idea that only a state that actively supported Christianity could secure the conditions for the free practice of Christian faith, proved much more durable.

At the turn of the century, then, gentry nationalists and Catholic churchmen condemned liberalism in Hungary in very similar terms. Each group linked one aspect of classical liberal ideology—secularism in the case of the Hungarian episcopate, laissez-faire capitalism in the case of the middling agrarian gentry—to an alien “Jewish” mentality. Each feared that this (always vaguely defined) mentality or set of values would undermine traditional society and subject Hungary to economic forces that would weaken its autonomy as national state. Both groups also believed that these developments were no accident of history; they believed that “agents” of socially disruptive “Jewish” values had taken advantage of the spirit of religious toleration and economic freedom traditionally espoused by Hungary’s liberal political elite. To counter these trends, both groups called for “Christian” national values to dominate the public sphere. The state, they maintained, must abandon its neutrality in matters of morality and should instead support the economic and moral interests of Christianity and Christian Hungarians in the laws it passed, the progress it promoted, and the restrictions it enacted. In a society so dominated by modern ideas and cultural styles, space for Christian values had to be created.

The need for a new Christian politics in Hungary seemed even more imperative after World War I. The cataclysm of 1918–1919—the collapse of the Habsburg military in the autumn of 1918, the occupation of Hungarian territory by the armies of neighboring states, and especially the formation of two revolutionary governments in quick succession—made the specter of the “Jewish menace” seem absolute-

ly real to many Hungarians. Among right-wing nationalists, it quickly became axiomatic that Hungarians had failed to defend their borders from predatory Romanian, Czech, and Yugoslav troops because cosmopolitan revolutionary leaders in Budapest—Jewish in “spirit” (and, in many cases, in ethnic origin)—had undermined the nation’s will to fight back. Jewish revolutionaries had delivered the *coup de grâce* to a nation already fatally weakened by the infiltration of alien cultural and political values. In other words, the lack of Christian mores in public life had become a matter of national security. This was, of course, a willfully wrong-headed misreading of Hungary’s postwar international position. Even so, politicians across the spectrum invented a Hungarian version of the “stab in the back” myth so powerful in Germany at the time: an anti-national “Jewish” spirit had fatally divided the nation in its greatest moment of peril. To combat this threat, Hungarian lawmakers even passed a *numerus clausus* law limiting Jewish enrollment at universities, a move that religious and secular leaders alike promised would make room for a new “Christian Hungarian” generation. To ensure their nation’s survival, public figures insisted that Hungarians had to reassert their Christian identity.

One can get a sense of the pervasive religious nationalist rhetoric from a resolution issued by a conference of Hungary’s three major Protestant confessions (Calvinist, Lutheran, and Unitarian) held in Budapest on December 4, 1919. The resolution called for Christian unity in the face of national emergency: “The country’s incomparable military, economic, and moral catastrophe has been caused by the spread of a destructive spiritual campaign consciously directed against the Christian world-view and the Hungarian national idea and by international subversive powers criminally transplanted here from abroad.” The assembled Protestants went on to declare that national salvation would only be possible if “the Christian moral world-view and the true Hungarian love of country again marches in as a driving power to every area of Hungarian public life.”¹⁰ The “Magyar Credo,” the first stanza of which was recited daily in schools, at religious services, and public gatherings, illustrates this popular fusion of faith and nationalist sentiment: “I believe in one God. I believe in one homeland. I believe in divine, eternal justice. I believe in the resurrection of Hungary. Amen.”

As the literary critic Antal Szerb later wrote of these years: “After the revolution, ... religion and nationalism... became virtually compul-

sory.”¹¹ This did not mean that Hungary had become a theocracy. All but the most unreconstructed reactionaries accepted that the boundaries between secular and religious matters had shifted dramatically over the course of the nineteenth century. No one imagined that churchmen should manage affairs of state in the place of secular politicians or that the church should supplant Parliament as a decision-making body. Instead, religion acquired a civic function. Hungary’s Christian nationalists believed that it would serve much in the way that Tocqueville described civic culture in the new American republic of the early nineteenth century: as a set of customs and mores that shaped the “whole moral and intellectual condition of a people.”¹² This consensus certainly enhanced the cultural authority of Hungary’s churches. Christian religious leaders were far more prominent at public functions than they had been before 1918. And Christian symbolism, as in the “Magyar Credo,” circulated freely in the new political climate. But the question remained: how, exactly, would Christian belief manifest itself in public affairs?

There could be no clear answer to this question. Secular nationalists were happy to invoke Hungary’s Christian traditions for their own purposes, wrapping themselves in the mantle of sacred mission to suit their needs. Protestant politicians, including Regent Miklós Horthy, a baptized Calvinist, appeared annually at celebrations of St. István’s Day and shared in the general and vaguely defined feeling of Christian patriotism. Throughout the interwar years, Hungary’s ministers of religion and public education repeatedly cautioned both churches (though usually the larger and more powerful Catholic Church) against disrupting the “confessional peace” so essential to national unity. Religion, they warned, was useful insofar as it inspired feelings of national loyalty and community. But missionary work—and especially the task of bringing Christian Hungarians more firmly into one Christian church rather than another—could be disruptive. Protestants, in particular, were deeply sensitive when Catholics tried to claim the mantle of national religion and bring more souls into the Roman Catholic Church.¹³ To cement the valuable church-state alliance and to manage these confessional disputes, Hungary’s governments accorded the Christian churches a great deal of support and public prominence, especially in education. In return, the governments expected that religious leaders would never assume that their faith took precedence over

national interests. Indeed, the minister for religion and education for much of the 1920s, Count Kunó Klebelsberg, explicitly warned the churches to check their more parochial concerns in an address he gave to the 1927 Catholic Congress: "Every church, without waiting for the intervention of the state or of other churches, should itself silence any screeching voices of aggressiveness in its own camp."¹⁴

Throughout the interwar years, however, Hungary's Catholic and Protestant churches—religious leaders and lay members—contested this vision of nationalist ecumenism. They insisted that they had an important role to play in defining the Christian national mores and values that were meant to shape society. They also argued that the entire project of rebuilding Christian Hungary would only fail if Christianity were simply a civic identity shorn of all the religious content. What the religion and education minister heard as "screeching aggressiveness" ought to be understood as the legitimate effort of Catholic and Protestant churchmen to protect a truly religious component within Christian nationalism. To support their position, Catholic and Protestant church leaders invoked the histories of their own particular confessions, arguing that the spread and defense of faith in the past had gone hand in hand with national development. If state leaders would recognize this history, they would then see that each church's social and mission work in the present was in fact also a nation-building, not nation-dividing, work.

For their part, Hungarian Catholics insisted that Christian nationalism could only be realized within their Church and through its magisterial teachings. One of the most insistent was Father Béla Bangha, S.J. Throughout his career Father Bangha had fought tirelessly to establish a distinctly Catholic voice in Hungary's public sphere. For years he argued that only truly Catholic newspapers and journals could combat the moral relativism and materialistic spirit churned out by the "Jewish media" in dozens of dailies and boulevard tabloids. Bangha's faith in the power of a *Catholic* media was absolute, and he had little patience for vague assertions of Christian unity. In particular, he was wary of a "Christian" politics defined *only* by antisemitism and vaguely antiliberal views. Without specific confessional content, Christian nationalism would become little more than window dressing. In a 1917 assessment of the state of the Catholic press in Hungary, Bangha expressed this view succinctly: "In principle, the concentration of Chris-

tians against unbelief and Jewish excesses sounds very fine; but in practice such a concentration has... never succeeded... In the final instance, we want a Catholic press for the defense of Catholicism.”¹⁵

These convictions guided Bangha in 1920 as he wrote *The Rebuilding of Hungary and Christianity*, a book-length proposal for the moral reconstruction of postwar Hungarian society. His thesis was simple: Catholicism was the *sine qua non* of a truly Christian Hungary. He conceded nothing to Hungary’s Protestants. Neither ecumenical nationalism nor a common Christian cause against unbelief could meet the moral and spiritual challenges that Hungary faced: “Protestants... sense very well, however much they may adhere to their confession, that Catholicism is the strongest fortress of the Christian faith and morality, the strongest bastion in the fight against liberal thought and destruction and has contributed the most value in the foundation of the country’s moral powers.”¹⁶

A similar triumphalist spirit infused Catholic pastoral initiatives in the 1920s. As the Church focused special attention on Budapest’s working class—the social stratum from which the Communist revolution had derived most of its support—Catholic activists tried to expand the pastoral and social activities of Marian Congregations. In addition, they launched an intensive church-building campaign in the capital city as a way of reclaiming physical urban space from the forces of godless communism. With these means, the Catholic Church vigorously reasserted Hungary’s historic identity as the *Regnum Marianum*, a nation dedicated to the Virgin Mary, with a special role to play at the eastern edge of Western (Catholic) Christendom.

Catholic churchmen and intellectuals also based their triumphalist claims on a reading of Hungarian history. As counter-revolutionary politicians re-established order and stability, Catholics emphasized Hungary’s origins as a medieval, hierarchical, and organic Christian kingdom.¹⁷ This was certainly not a new argument. The Catholic Church had traditionally based its claims to privilege on their understanding of the state’s origins.¹⁸ But it was a decisive shift in Hungary’s public historical culture. Throughout the liberal nineteenth century, public discussion of the nation’s past tended to focus on resistance to Catholic Habsburg rule. Nationalist historians typically looked back on the Reformation as a time when the spread of a new faith (and the translation of the Gospels into the vernacular) resulted in a flowering

of national consciousness. For this reason, Protestantism was traditionally seen during the liberal era as more “Hungarian” than Catholicism. This changed after 1918, as Catholicism supplanted Protestantism as the Christian confession most consonant with Hungarian national interests.

Much of the credit for this reversal is due to Gyula Szekfű, dean of Hungarian historians in this period and a devout Catholic. In a number of seminal works, Szekfű developed a vision of Hungarian history that sought long continuities between Hungary’s first Christian king and patron saint, István, and the present-day Hungarian state. St. István’s state, founded in the year 1000, became for Szekfű the irreducible core of Hungarian identity in history, an ethical principle that endured across centuries even when the Hungarian state itself had been broken apart by foreign powers. Clearly, this historical vision could be made to serve irredentist politics at a time when so much of the historic state was controlled by Hungary’s neighbors. But it also reflected the Church’s conception of its own civilizing mission in Hungary and the Carpathian Basin. Nowhere was this more evident than at the International Eucharistic Congress, held in Budapest in 1938 to celebrate the 900th anniversary of St. István’s death. In a series of masses, processions, and festivities held throughout the year, both the Hungarian Church and the Vatican endorsed the notion of Hungary as a thousand-year-old Christian state ever ready to defend Christendom against the infidel, be he pagan, Turk, or Bolshevik.¹⁹ Together, (Catholic) church and state would carry out their historic mission to defend Christian civilization at its borders.

Hungarian Protestants resented this “trans-valuation” of national history. Calvinists, in particular, insisted that it was their church, and not the one in Rome, that best embodied the national will, and that it had been the work of their church that had best complemented the secular hopes of the Hungarian nation. In part, they continued to look to the same mythic history of reformation and revolution that their predecessors in the nineteenth century had embraced. But theirs was also a demographic argument: The Hungarian Reformed Church was almost exclusively comprised of ethnic Magyars. The Roman Catholic Church was, of course, a community that transcended national borders by definition; even within Hungary, the vast majority of ethnic Germans and ethnic Slovaks, interwar Hungary’s two largest (non-Jewish)

ethnic minorities, were Catholic parishioners. Though the Catholic Church in Hungary did very little indeed to defend the ethnic or linguistic rights of these minorities, Calvinists still insisted that their faith was the true “Magyar religion.”

The Reformed Church, however, did have to answer the charge leveled against them by Father Bangha, namely, that only the Catholic Church provided the surest defense against an alien liberalism. After all, both the Calvinist and Lutheran churches in Hungary had enthusiastically embraced nineteenth-century liberalism as a guarantor of confessional tolerance. Many of Hungary’s most prominent liberal politicians (such as the prime ministers Kálmán and István Tisza, who were both one-time general curators in the Reformed Church) had simultaneously been Protestant lay leaders. In addition, some well-known Calvinists had placed their hopes for social progress in the revolutionary regime that took power in November 1918 (though not, it should be added, in the Bolshevik regime that followed it). At the turn of the century, however, a new generation of more conservative Calvinist churchmen had begun to draw distinctions between true Calvinist “liberalism” and what they described as the “libertinism” rampant in Hungarian public culture. Their counterattacks had sparked intense debate within the Hungarian Calvinist community around issues like Freemasonry, the “Jewish question,” and more generally, to the relationship of Calvinism to notions of “progress.” After 1919 these political conservatives took control of the Reformed Church. Almost immediately the Church began internal reviews of many of its schoolteachers and seminary faculty, dismissing scores from their posts.²⁰ In addition, new figures, like the Transylvanian pastor and theological instructor László Ravasz, rose to prominence. A noted critic of radical democrats within the Church, as well as a highly regarded preacher and writer, Ravasz gave Hungary’s Reformed Church a more conservative appearance that fit far better into the new political climate.²¹

With these institutional changes, Calvinist theologians and church leaders could more plausibly refute the triumphalist tone that many Hungarian Catholic leaders took. Instead, Hungarian Calvinists insisted that only their faith had the moral reserves to provide a truly national defense against the horrors of revolutionary politics. Calvinism, one prominent theologian argued, provided a holistic Christian worldview that, like Catholicism, provided individuals with a moral vision to face

the disparate challenges of modernity, but which also, and unlike Catholicism, was wholly national.²² Only the Reformed Church had the historic background needed to mediate between the national interest and a transnational defense of Christianity against godlessness.

Given this peculiar fusion of faith, history, and demography, Hungarian Calvinists were typically more enthusiastic about ethno-nationalist politics than their Catholic rivals. The differences between the two confessions were most apparent in debates around issues of social welfare, and especially land reform. Throughout the interwar years (and indeed until 1945), rural Hungary was dominated by large latifundia, on which a whole class of impoverished peasants (ethnic Magyars) labored in semi-feudal conditions. By the 1930s a new generation of populist intellectuals began to call attention to these gross inequities. Accusing large landholders (which included, crucially, the Catholic Church) of exploiting the nation for financial gain, they produced a vast number of books, essays, scientific studies, and journalistic reportage that exposed the conditions in which these “true” and ethnically “pure” Hungarians suffered. Young Calvinists joined this chorus of populist outrage with enthusiasm, organizing newspapers, workshops, and retreats to generate public discussion, including most famously the 1943 gathering of populists at Balatonszárszó hosted by the Calvinist youth group *Soli Deo Gloria*. By contrast, the Catholic episcopate, conscious of the tremendous financial resources they had in their landed property, remained far less inclined to any serious discussion of property reallocation.

Many Calvinist congregations linked their pastoral initiatives to this populist sentiment and especially to widespread fears of population decline. Throughout Hungary, pastors used their own parish records to document demographic change and thus produce knowledge about the “dying” nation for widespread public consumption. During a time of economic depression, seminary students raised funds to resettle large and poor (Calvinist) Magyar families from overpopulated regions into border areas of mixed ethnic identity and then to provide them with a modicum of social assistance. Theological students also organized and ran adult education classes for peasants, combining spiritual edification with practical knowledge to improve the standard of living among those “most Hungarian” of Hungarians. Certainly, Catholic groups carried out similar social mission work in rural areas.²³

By the end of the 1930s, Catholic youth organizations (and especially the young men's organization, KALOT) were actively promoting their own vision of a new society in which small farms owned by Hungarian peasants would replace the huge estates. Even so, one can still say with some justification that it was Protestants generally, and young Calvinist activists in particular, who were the most active in calling for reforms to improve the lot of the ethnic Magyar peasants. In the words of one prominent young Calvinist activist, Kálmán Újszászy, who was asked years later to describe the attitude shared by many of his fellow seminarians in the late 1930s and 1940s: "The peasant entering civil society [*a polgárosodó paraszt*], the modernization of Hungary: this was the main path ... with which we identified. So a Hungary whose basic foundation was the educated citizen-peasant, unromanticized... This was... the world of the Protestant peasantry in the rural towns."²⁴ During the interwar years, the Hungarian Reformed Church repeatedly asserted its own special mission to these most valuable members of the ethnic Magyar nation.

In each of these cases, historical memory combined with religious activism. But the content of both memory and faith were different for each of Hungary's Christian confessions. More than one variant of the Christian nation influenced the political culture of interwar Hungary. The Christian churches embraced these differing visions of nation and placed them at the center of their understanding of Christian mission. In some cases, this fusion of faith and patriotism dovetailed neatly with the interests of secular politicians. In other cases, it was an irritant to be managed. For example, the magisterial authority proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church was a tremendously suggestive symbol to a political elite committed to maintaining social order. Yet attempts by Catholic activists to mobilize believers into mass organizations like Catholic Action were viewed by these same political authorities (and by their allies in the episcopate) with deep suspicion. Politicians intent on pursuing an ethno-nationalist agenda looked, in turn, to the Reformed Church for allies and found collaborators there for state-funded projects to promote increased natality. But when Calvinist activists made more radical demands for serious social reform to improve the lives of Hungary's poorest peasants, they found that their appeals to Christian nationalist justice often fell on deaf ears in the halls of Parliament. Thus the boundaries between secular and religious life in Chris-

tian Hungary were continually shifting, remaining the object of intense political negotiation.

As the Depression deepened in the 1930s, Hungary's Christian leaders actively lobbied their government to play a more active role in securing the physical and moral well-being of Christian Hungarians. They hoped that initiatives like KALOT or the Reformed Church organizations could inspire government officials to commit their far greater resources to similar actions. But they also hoped that expanding the scope of state intervention in social questions would increase the opportunities for cooperation between religious and secular leaders. By the end of the 1930s, these efforts had borne some fruit: the outlines of a modern welfare state had begun to emerge from the interactions between Christian activists and state administrators. In 1940, for example, the Hungarian Parliament passed a law establishing a National Family Defense Foundation, which offered support and some financial assistance to needy (ethnic Magyar) families with many children. This measure, in particular, took the Calvinist work among ethnic Magyar families as an inspiration; not coincidentally, Reformed Bishop László Ravasz was an honorary chairman.²⁵ To those hoping for state action inspired by both religious faith and nationalist pride, these steps seemed like a promising beginning.

But many secular nationalists were not content with these initial developments. They looked to other countries where they saw state officials intervening far more dramatically in all aspects of social welfare, family policy, and reproduction in order to secure the healthiest, most productive, most militarily fit, and ethnically "purest" citizenry possible.²⁶ Inspired by what they saw, Hungarian specialists in population politics founded several institutes with a clearly irredentist focus, aimed at creating an expansive Magyar nation "20 million strong." These were much like think tanks in which medical experts worked with social reformers to promote a population increase.²⁷ Many also called for laws that would give state officials enhanced powers to regulate fundamental matters like marriage for the good of ethnic purity. Of course, all this was popular among many believing Christians as well. And yet Hungary's religious leaders could not help but notice that social reformers who wanted the most vigorous population politics invariably looked to racial science, rather than religious values, to guide them in their work.

The growth of Nazi German influence in Hungary only heightened these worries. By the late 1930s, many Hungarians looked to Nazi Germany as the model for a “new Europe” organized around racial principles. Of course, a good deal of pro-German enthusiasm arose from hopes that Hitler might redraw the borders of East-Central Europe and so allow Hungary to regain the territories lost after World War I. Many in Hungary also admired the Nazi regime for acting decisively to rebuild its military strength after a humiliating peace settlement. They noted that this had revived the German economy and created jobs for millions of unemployed workers. In addition, the Nazi regime was fiercely anti-communist, an attitude that was broadly popular in Hungary. Finally, a growing number of Hungarians saw how the Nazi regime had begun to take active steps to remove Jews and “Jewish influence” from German social life and vowed to imitate them in Hungary. By the last years of the 1930s, the German example, combined with the lingering economic effects of the Great Depression, contributed to a rightward drift in Hungarian political life.

Hungary’s Christian church leaders worried that pro-German enthusiasts in Hungary would also copy Nazi policy towards organized religion. As the Nazi party consolidated its power in Germany, it systematically dismantled all independent civic organizations, including religious youth groups. Indeed, Pope Pius XI had condemned these policies in his encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge*. At the same time, Catholic intellectuals across Europe began to outline their fears of a “total state,” in which secular rulers claimed to regulate vast areas of social life without regard to any principle but *raison d’etat*. These debates found expression in Hungarian Catholic journals as well.²⁸ Naturally, Catholic critics of the “total state” took the nineteenth-century “culture war” critique of the liberal state as their starting point; Catholics in Hungary decried the long road that they saw connecting the church-political battles of the 1890s to the present crisis. But the ambition of the Nazi regime, and of its admirers across Europe, to dominate the public sphere without opposition, and to subject nearly every aspect of social life to political requirements, gave these debates a new context and a special urgency in the 1930s and 1940s. For this reason, Hungary’s religious leaders were especially concerned when they heard Hungarian fascists describe the role that they envisioned for religion. In his programmatic book *The Road and the Way*, Ferenc Szálasi, lead-

er of the Arrow Cross party, echoed Nazi German calls for a “positive Christianity” when he wrote that it was the duty of every “Magyar priest” to be “the priest and brother of every Magyar and, according to the commands of his faith, should bring his Magyar brothers closer to God, but not as Catholics, Calvinists, Lutherans, Greek Catholics, Greek Orthodox, or Unitarians.”²⁹ In other words, religion would not be an autonomous source of moral value. It would simply be a tool of statecraft.

Fears about Nazi influence and hopes to guarantee the welfare of a Christian Hungarian society made the Jewish question especially central. By 1939 the growing political power of the Hungarian Right had compelled the Hungarian government to sponsor two anti-Jewish laws, each of them written to restrict the number of Jews in many sectors of Hungarian economic life. But many on the Right insisted that the government had to attack the “Jewish problem” as a question of racial hygiene also, and proposed a law prohibiting marriage between Jews and non-Jews along the lines of the Nuremberg Laws. The arguments of racial ideologue Zoltán Bosnyák were typical. Citing studies of abortion, childlessness, and rates of children born with congenital defects, Bosnyák argued that the continued intermarriage of Hungarians and Jews led inexorably to the pollution and disintegration of Hungarian national society. Jews, he maintained, carried within them certain cultural and spiritual ways of being which they passed from generation to generation as a biological inheritance. These were alien to Hungarian life. Only state regulation of marriage and family life on a racial basis could halt these disturbing trends and shatter the Hungarian-Jewish symbiosis once and for all.³⁰

Under pressure from radical rightists like Bosnyák, the Hungarian government proposed a third anti-Jewish law in 1941 that barred marriage between Christians and Jews on racial grounds. Crucially, it would be the state, and not the churches, who would determine who was Jewish. The law put the Christian churches in a difficult political position. On the one hand, both the Catholic and Protestant churches in Hungary had long agreed with secular nationalists that Christian Hungarians should find their way into the modern world protected from alien (and “Jewish”) trends and influences. Religious leaders had been especially critical of “Jewish capitalism” since the late nineteenth century, an attitude that led them to support the first two anti-Jewish

laws of 1938 and 1939 despite misgivings about how the laws might affect converts. But every Christian leader in Hungary, whether Catholic or Protestant, insisted that the idea of Christian Hungary was meaningless if it did not give men and women the freedom to profess their Christian beliefs and to accept the sacraments of the faith. To them, this was the *sine qua non* for a state that claimed to be founded on a Christian moral system. For this reason, the third anti-Jewish law of 1941, which nullified conversion and transformed Christianity into a racial identity, was an unacceptable arrogation of fundamental church prerogatives. Despite fierce opposition by the radical right, leading figures of each of Hungary's three large Christian churches (Roman Catholic, Calvinist, and Lutheran) stood in parliament as *ex officio* members to denounce the new law and to vote against it. Despite their opposition, the bill passed easily into law in the summer of 1941.

Religious opposition to Hungary's anti-Jewish laws was not the product of an ecumenical movement. Each church came to the same position from very different starting points. When Hungary's Catholic bishops rejected the antisemitic marriage law, they did so by referring to the fundamental dignity of the human person. As historians of human rights have shown, a particularly Catholic vision of this concept, based on the philosophy of personalism, began to take shape during the late 1930s.³¹ The most important proponents of the idea wrote and worked far from Hungary, but their ideas found expression in papal encyclicals like *Mit brennender Sorge* and thus had influence across Catholic Europe. Central to this philosophy was the idea that natural law guaranteed to every person the right to realize him- or herself as a moral being. Jusztinián Cardinal Serédi, prince-primate of the Hungarian Catholic Church, was undoubtedly referring to these ideas when he declared, in an address given on December 13, 1942, to a Catholic lay association, that "There are no master races... There is no people less worthy than another. The same star of epiphany shines over all of them."³² Hungarian Protestants, by contrast, insisted on the unassailable truth of Biblical texts, especially those that called upon believers to spread the good news of the Gospel to all mankind, including Jews. They also insisted that sincerely professed conversion had a power to transform the human soul in ways that no secular power could fathom. As Bishop Ravasz put it in a speech to the Hungarian Parliament during the debates about the 1941 anti-Jewish law: "We teach on the basis

of Holy Scripture that God redeems men from their sins, so that they can be born again out of the miraculous grace and power of the Holy Spirit.”³³ But doctrinal or stylistic differences notwithstanding, Hungary’s Catholic and Protestant leaders both insisted on the fundamental autonomy of religion in a world where the state claimed ever greater power to shape and mold society.

Challenged by Hungary’s radical right to take a stand on antisemitic extremism, Hungary’s Catholic and Protestant church leaders both adopted positions that were clearly anti-totalitarian, in that they stood against the spread from Germany to Hungary of particular ideas about race and the state. But it is also important to recall what these principled stands were not—a defense of Jews as equal members of the Hungarian nation. Though the disjuncture may strike the twenty-first-century observer as bizarre, historians of World War II and of the Holocaust have shown time and again that anti-totalitarian politics rarely spurred Europeans, either religious or secular, to vigorously defend the human rights of European Jews at the moment of extreme crisis in the early 1940s.³⁴ Hungary’s Christian leaders admitted as much in public. Speaking in a radio address in 1938, Bishop Ravasz insisted that “Christianity does not exist to take care of political, financial, or social inconveniences.” Ravasz would go on in 1941 to denounce the third anti-Jewish law on marriage for denying Jews the transformational power of conversion. But conversion, to Ravasz, had little to do with a person’s rights in society. Christ, he argued, “did not call on the pagan to convert so that he could protect his property or his social standing—he called on everyone to deny himself and take up His Cross.”³⁵ Catholic Bishop Gyula Glattfelder, one of the most outspoken critics of the rise of racial ideology in Hungary, made this point even more clearly. In a personal letter to a government minister regarding the matter of converts in the Jewish labor service battalions, he explained that “the Church [acts] solely on the basis of eternal, divine laws, which explains why we are not defending the Jews, but instead are raising our voices when our believers are stripped of their rights.”³⁶

Elsewhere, Christian thinkers like Jacques Maritain or Johannes Oesterreicher may have been deriving a more radical understanding of the human person from Christian tradition or advancing a more uncompromising form of anti-racism.³⁷ But these ideas had little influence in wartime Hungary. Focused almost totally on the dilemmas

faced by converts, Hungary's Christian leaders thought long and spoke clearly about how best to defend the rights of (Christian) man. This may have been conceptually clear, but it was not an effective opposition to the "politics of genocide" in Hungary.³⁸ As Hannah Arendt noted in her famous discussion of the "end of the rights of man," at the core of the twentieth-century tragedies like the Holocaust lay "[n]ot the loss of specific rights... but the loss of a community willing and able to guarantee any rights." The loss of national rights, she added, "in all instances entail[ed] the loss of human rights."³⁹ Imagining Hungary as a Christian nation opened up space for intense debates about how best to ensure the Christian character of Hungarian society. But it did not suggest ways to defend the rights of Hungary's non-Christian minorities, nor give the churches any power to set limits on the exclusion of Jews from the Hungarian national community.

Very few went further. One who did was Sister Margit Slachta, a Catholic nun and founder of the Society of the Sisters of Social Service. Already in 1941, in opposition to an early (and discontinued) attempt to deport undocumented Jews to Nazi-occupied territory, Sister Slachta wrote in protest to a wide circle of acquaintances in positions of social and political power:

We raise our voices to protest that in our country such mass official atrocities can happen and we do this as human beings, as Christians, and as Hungarians. As human beings, our every human feeling and healthy natural instinct revolts against it. As Christians we see in it the most serious violation of the commands of God and our religion. As Hungarians, we cannot let the stain on our Hungarian honor that these terrible outrages represent pass without a word... We know that right now we do not represent a popular view. But we consider it our responsibility to raise our voices in those matters where silence would be a sin according to our consciences.⁴⁰

Her petition is remarkable, not only for its moral clarity, but also for the way in which she explicitly invoked both Christian and national values as reasons for opposing the internment and deportation of Jews from Hungarian soil. But it remained an isolated example. Three years later, as the deportation of some 440,000 Hungarian Jews to Aus-

chwitz began, none of Hungary's Christian churches issued any public statement like this.

Hungary's Christian churches took part in defining Christian nationalism in Hungary because they hoped it would enable them to bring religious values into the public square more effectively. By presenting their mission work as national work also, Hungarian Christian leaders inspired many people to see their religious and national identities as symbiotic and not mutually exclusive or even sharply distinct. Because of this, the years between the two world wars were a kind of golden age for Hungarian Catholicism, similar in many ways to the "Indian Summer of French Christendom" that Eugen Weber saw in 1930s France.⁴¹ Faith also inspired many young Hungarian Protestants to take part in the populist movement, the most important social movement in 1930s Hungary. By these measures, then, the years between the two world wars were a high-water mark for Christian activism in Hungary.

But the success with which Hungary's Christian leaders asserted the role of religion in public life cannot be decoupled from exclusionary politics. Catholic and Protestant activists had advanced the idea of Christian Hungary as a vision of Hungary entering the modern age untouched by foreign, disruptive, and "Jewish" cultural forces, and they had sought alliances with secular nationalists in order to realize this vision. But with this consensus established, Christian national politics ultimately turned to how best to realize these aims. When radical rightists offered thoroughly secular understandings of Christian Hungary, in which Christianity was little more than a racial or ethnic identity, Hungary's Christian leaders opposed them only by arguing about the kind of anti-Jewish politics best suited to a truly Christian Hungary. For this reason, many religious leaders supported economic antisemitism, even as they opposed racial measures targeting marriage. Hungary's Christian leaders thus invoked their faith, as well as their belief in the national good, to take a clear and firm stance against untrammelled state power, which they saw as a symbol of creeping Nazi influence in their country. But a symbiotic relationship between nation and religion did not easily suggest a community shared equally by Christians and non-Christians. At the moment of crisis in 1944, this aspect of Christian nationalism was fatal, as none of the Christian churches was willing to repudiate the basic tenets of Christian national politics, even when

those political principles were being used to justify deportation and genocide. At a time when historians are reassessing the place of Christianity in Eastern Europe, the successes and shortcomings of religious nationalism in Hungary thus remain, both as analytical and as moral challenges.

NOTES

- 1 Margit Balogh and Jenő Gergely, *Egyházak az újkori Magyarországon, 1790–1992: Adattár* (Budapest: História. MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1996), 165, 261–263.
- 2 Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion*, trans. George Staunton (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), xiv.
- 3 For helpful comparative analyses of the interplay between religion and nation in other specific cases, see Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994) and *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*, ed. Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- 4 Shulamit Volkov, “Antisemitism as a Cultural Code: Reflections on the History and Historiography of Antisemitism in Imperial Germany,” *Leo Baeck Yearbook* 23 (1978): 25–46.
- 5 Miklós Szabó, *Az újkonzervativizmus és a jobboldali radikalizmus története (1867–1918)* (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2003).
- 6 See János Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* (Budapest: Osiris, 2001); Judit Kubinszky, *Politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon, 1875–1890* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1976).
- 7 Robert Nemes, “The Uncivil Origins of Civil Marriage: Hungary,” in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 313–335.
- 8 Speech to the Upper House of the Hungarian Parliament on October 3, 1894. “A vallás szabad gyakorlatáról,” in *Schlauch Lőrinc bíbornok-püspök beszédei és dolgozatai*, vol. 4 (Budapest: Franklin, 1899).
- 9 See, e.g., the essay by Ottokár Prohászka, which appeared in the Catholic newspaper, *Magyar Sion*, in 1893. “A zsidó recepció a morális szempontból” has been reprinted in *Prohászka Ottokár: Kultúra és terror*, ed. Rezső Szij (Budapest: Szenci Molnár Társaság, 1997), 15–33.
- 10 “Protestánsok a keresztény egységért,” *Új Nemzedék* (December 5, 1919), 4–5.
- 11 Cited in Ignác Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century* (Budapest: Corvina-Osiris, 1999), 111.

- 12 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Knopf, 1956), 299.
- 13 Protestants were especially outraged when Catholic demographers based their claims to superiority on the sheer size of each confessional community. The most provocative of Catholic studies was undoubtedly Antal Pezenhoffer, "Melyik a magyar vallás?" *Magyar Kultúra* 6 (1918): 155–166, 254–260.
- 14 "A katolikus nagygyűlés előtt," *Nemzeti Újság* (October 9, 1927). Reproduced in Kunó Klebelsberg, *Neonacionalizmus* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1928), 82–87.
- 15 "Father Bangha's Report about the Catholic Press Question," Esztergomi Primási Levéltár (EPL), Cat. 44: 3078/1920.
- 16 Béla Bangha, *Magyarország újjáépítése és a kereszténység* (Budapest: Szt. István Társulat, 1920).
- 17 Here, and in what follows, my understanding of the history politics of interwar Hungary owes much to Árpád von Klimó, *Nation, Konfession, Geschichte. Zur nationalen Geschichtskultur Ungarns im europäischen Kontext (1860–1948)* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2003).
- 18 In addition to Klimó, *Nation, Konfession, Geschichte*, see also Joachim Bahlcke, *Ungarischer Episkopat und österreichische Monarchie. Von einer Partnerschaft zur Konfrontation (1686–1790)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005).
- 19 *Album Congressus XXXIVi Eucharistici Internationalis* (Budapest: Sumptibus et typis Societati Sancti Stephani, 1938).
- 20 See Jenő Szigeti, "Egyházaink az 1919/20-as ellenforradalmi fordulatban," *Theologiai Szemle* 12, no. 7–8 (1970): 221; Imre Kádár, *The Church in the Storm of Times: The History of the Hungarian Reformed Church during the Two World Wars, Revolutions, and Counter-Revolutions* (Budapest: Bibliotheca, 1958), 34–41.
- 21 For a discussion of this re-orientation, see Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 95–106.
- 22 This is a theme that the theologian Jenő Sebestyén returned to often, especially in the pages of the journal he founded and edited, *Kálvinista Szemle*.
- 23 Margit Balogh, *A KALOT és a katolikus társadalompolitika, 1935–1946* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1998).
- 24 "'A szociográfusi szemlélettel el lehet jutni a legmesszebb, csak a csúcsra nem!' Huszár Tibor beszélgetése Újszász Kálmánnal," *Újszász Kálmán emlékkönyv* (Budapest and Sárospatak: Szabad Tér Kiadó, 1996), 41.
- 25 See Ravasz's introduction to Gábor Doros, *Családvédelem: Küzdelem a születéscsökkenés ellen* (Budapest: A Magyar Családvédelmi Szövetség, 1938).
- 26 István Deák, "How to Construct a Productive, Disciplined, Monoethnic Society: The Dilemma of East Central European Governments, 1914–1956," in Amir Weiner, ed., *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth-Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework* (Palo Alto,

- CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 205–217. See also: István Hoóz, *Népesedéspolitika és népességfejlődés Magyarországon a két világháború között* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970).
- 27 For an overview of some of these groups, see *EPOL (Gesellschaft für Biopolitik). Ziel und Organisation ihrer Institutionen* (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1940).
 - 28 See, e.g., Father László Vargha, S.J. “Menekülés az államba,” *Magyar Kultúra* 34, no. 13–14 (July 5–20, 1937).
 - 29 From Ferenc Szálasi, *Út és cél* (1935). Excerpted in *Szálasi Ferenc alapvető munkája és 3 beszéde* (Buenos Aires: Hungarista Mozgalom, 1959), 11. On the idea of “positive Christianity,” see Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), esp. 13–86.
 - 30 Zoltán Bosnyák, *A harmadik zsidótörvény és a házasság* (Budapest: Stádium, 1941).
 - 31 Samuel Moyn, “Personalism, Community, and the Origins of Human Rights,” in Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, ed., *A History of Human Rights in the Twentieth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).
 - 32 Citation taken from an article in *Schweizerische Republikanische Blätter*, January 16, 1943, reproduced in Gabriel Adriányi, *Fünfundzwanzig Jahre Ungarische Kirchengeschichte, 1895–1945* (Main: v. Hase u. Koehler, 1974), 159–161. See also 101–106.
 - 33 Excerpted from László T. László, *Szellemi honvédelem. Katolikus demokrata mozgalmak és az egyházak ellenállása a második világháború idején Magyarországon* (Rome: Katolikus Szemle, 1980), 60.
 - 34 See, e.g., Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).
 - 35 László Ravasz, “Mit kerestek ti a keresztyénségben? Részletek dr. Ravasz László rádiopredikációjából,” *Református Élet* 5, no. 51 (December 17, 1938): 498–9.
 - 36 EPL. 7770/1942. Letter of Bishop Gyula Glattfelder to Cardinal Jusztinián Serédi, July 15, 1942.
 - 37 John Connelly, “Catholic Racism and Its Opponents,” *Journal of Modern History* 79, no. 4 (December 2007): 813–847.
 - 38 Randolph L. Braham, *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary* (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1994).
 - 39 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego, New York, and London: Harcourt Brace, 1973), 297–299.
 - 40 Tamás Majsai and Ilona Mona, eds., “Iratok a körösmezei zsidódeportálás történetéhez,” *A Ráday-gyűjtemény évkönyve* 4–5 (1984–85): 226.
 - 41 Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1994), 182–206.

Searching for a “Fourth Path”

Czech Catholicism between Liberalism, Communism, and Nazism

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From a purely literary point of view, the term “Catholic literature” is questionable. But from the perspective of cultural and intellectual history and the sociology of literature, Catholic literature is a rich and undeniable phenomenon in modern European culture. A distinct Catholic literature (or Catholic culture) emerged during the nineteenth century, in different countries at different times, in response to the apparent marginalization of religion in public life.¹ Faced with secularizing governments and anti-clerical political and cultural movements, European Catholics used literature as a vehicle of self-expression and self-identification and as a means of building community in increasingly non-Catholic societies. Catholic literature was, therefore, at its core an oppositional, polemical literature. In France and the Czech Lands, Catholic writers wrote against the lax practice or outright irreligion of their nominally Catholic conationals. Meanwhile, in England and Germany, Catholic literature was directed against the majority Protestants, who were, in drawing near to liberal theology, not only religious adversaries but also agents of secularization.

In the first half of the twentieth century, a new phase opened, as even Catholic writers themselves disclaimed affiliation with a specifically “Catholic” literature. Unlike their nineteenth-century predecessors, they avoided the word “Catholic” as a marker of their literature, and they cooperated with non-Catholic authors, even those of opposing ideological backgrounds.² The aphorism “I am not a Catholic writer, but a writer who is Catholic” became the almost canonical self-definition of Catholic writers seeking to defend themselves against the stereotype of being propagandists or trivial authors without modern aesthetic values.³ At the same time, however, these

writers did maintain Catholic literary groups, cultural journals, and publishing houses.

An overview of European cultural history between the two world wars shows that a kind of Catholic literature did exist, not simply as the cumulative sum of various Catholic writers in different countries but as a real transnational cultural community. Authors reviewed and/or translated works of coreligionists from other countries and often cultivated personal friendships with them. Catholic cultural journals such as *Hochland* in Germany, the Slovenian *Dom in Svet*, and *Akord* in the Czech Lands, presented a “canon” of European Catholic authors, and critics and scholars of the time offered overviews of the various national Catholic literatures.⁴ The work of contemporary scholars, drawing upon recent approaches in comparative literature studies, has advanced this picture of a European Catholic literature and even brought American Catholic authors into view.⁵

A review of the scholarship of early twentieth-century Catholic culture in Europe makes it clear that disproportionate attention has been paid to the western part of the continent. The canon of Catholic authors translated and published throughout Europe has been composed mainly of French and British writers, such as Paul Claudel, Charles Péguy, François Mauriac, Georges Bernanos, G.K. Chesterton, Evelyn Waugh, and Graham Greene.⁶ Only a few authors from other European countries have been acknowledged as a part of this canon, such as the German writer Gertrud von le Fort, Norwegian Nobel laureate Sigrid Undset, the Dane Johannes Jørgensen, Giovanni Papini of Italy, and Nikolai Berdyaev, whose entry into this circle came as a result of his close relationship with Jacques and Raissa Maritain. No writers from Central and Eastern Europe achieved recognition among these authors, nor have they been addressed in recent comparative studies. But Catholic writers of the region are worthy of study, as we see in their work the reception of impulses from the West and transformation of those impulses to their specific contexts.

The notion of these Catholic writers as in some way pupils of their West European coreligionists is accurate, in that they did look to the West for literary inspiration and models. Certainly, many of the themes and styles of Western European Catholic literature were appropriate to other regional contexts. For instance, Catholic writing across Europe was colored by literary regionalism and ruralism, as prose writers

and poets emphasized the values associated with the traditional way of life in the countryside, as opposed to modern industrial society. Also prominent in different national literatures were examples of the "Catholic novel," a subtype of the modern novel that reflected many Catholics' perception of life in the secularized world.⁷ As represented in the fiction of Mauriac, Bernanos, Waugh, and Greene, characters in Catholic novels expressed a radical conflict with the modern world, and often a sense of living "in exile," whether from the "heathen" world, Enlightenment reason, or Paradise. But Catholic writers in Central and Eastern Europe also had to face issues very different than those in Britain or France. In the Habsburg Empire, for example, Catholic Czechs, Slovenes, Slovaks, and Croatians had to contend with a static, often superficial state Catholicism that brought the Church and dynasty together into a ruling alliance. Emerging national movements in the empire often had important liberal branches that connected nationalist political and cultural aims with emancipation from this Austrian Catholicism. Writing in this context, some authors thus sought to express their own and their people's Catholicism in a new, alternative manner. These authors rejected stale Habsburg Catholicism in hope of a Catholicism that was far more fruitful and inspiring. Just as liberal democratic and socialist intellectuals admired writers and movements in France or Britain, so too did these Catholic writers find inspiration in the work of Léon Bloy, Paul Claudel, or G.K. Chesterton.

The Czech case is both typical and unique in this context. The history of Czech society in the nineteenth century shows some special traits compared with other countries in the region. Anti-clericalism in the Czech Lands was extraordinarily intensive due to the nationalist perception of the Catholic Church as associated with the Austrians, and therefore "anti-Czech," and the fascination of Czech artists and journalists with the Bohemian reformation of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Despite this attention to historical figures such as Jan Hus, Jan Žižka, and Jan Amos Komenský, there was little interest in the contemporary Czech Protestant churches. Thus the majority of Czechs remained of a mindset that can be described as "formally Catholic, nationally Protestant, practically liberal."⁸ This tendency culminated in the founding after World War I of a secular (and, in its initial rhetoric, anti-Catholic) republic. The founding father of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, interpreted the foundation of the

state as well as other political changes after World War I as a victory of democracy, which was of liberal Protestant origin, over theocracy, whether Catholic or Orthodox in form.⁹ Czech Catholic intellectuals therefore found their spiritual, artistic, and political inspiration in France and Britain, where Catholics likewise faced an aggressively secular state or were in the minority. French and British Catholic culture offered models of modernist creativity as one of the prominent forms of Catholic self-expression, and writers in those nations showed a willingness to enter artistic coalitions with other enemies of the prevailing secular, capitalist, and liberal democratic order.

As it developed in the prewar and interwar periods, Czech Catholic literature demonstrated the four traits common to Catholic literature across the continent. First, Catholic writers often held to the principle of “pure poetry,” which was cultivated by Paul Valéry, who did not associate it with any religious meaning, and Henri Brémond, for whom pure poetry was a religious matter. According to Brémond, the highest phase of poetical creativity (*l'état poétique*) was analogous to a mystical experience.¹⁰ Following this theory, Catholic critics argued that every real, deep piece of poetry was basically religious, whether or not its author personally professed any religious belief. This concept of pure poetry was widely discussed by Czech Catholic literary critics in the 1920s (as seen in the journals *Tvar* and *Poesia*) and embraced in the 1930s by Catholic poets such as Jan Zahradníček. A second common theme of European Catholic literature was regionalism and the celebration of rural life, which in the Czech context developed spontaneously from the “village fiction” of the 1920s. Third, there were several examples of the “Catholic novel” in Czech literature. Central to the Catholic novel, as opposed to the standard modern novel, was the view of the material world as having a spiritual dimension. The visible world was not separated from the spiritual; rather, it was a “sacramental” manifestation of the spiritual. The human subject was a battlefield in the struggle between absolute Good and absolute Evil, with his or her actions having inescapable metaphysical consequences. Thus the Catholic novel often presented—in a direct and realistic manner—acts of evil and sin. As in other national literatures, the Czech Catholic novel addressed these existential questions of sin and salvation, although the most notable examples were in the more popular form of the historical novel.¹¹

Fourth, like their coreligionists elsewhere in Europe, Czech Catholic writers criticized the prevailing social, economical, and political systems of the interwar period, that is, liberalism, capitalism, and democracy. Western European writers expressed this view in fiction, in single-author journals (e.g., Charles Péguy's journal *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*), in journalistic activities, or in personal engagement with a political movement or party. The most influential of this last type of engagement was Action Française, a movement (and daily newspaper of the same name) led by prominent intellectuals Charles Maurras, Léon Daudet, and Henri Massis, and supported, at least temporarily, by other, even more noteworthy figures such as Jacques Maritain, François Mauriac, and Georges Bernanos. Action Française was the prototype for movements like Associazione nazionalista Italiana, Acción Española, Integralismo Lusitano in Portugal, and the Rexist Party in Belgium, while for Czech Catholic intellectuals it became a hoped-for model of political activism.¹² In their political and social criticism, European Catholic intellectuals, whether speaking as individuals or as part of a group, chose varied targets and proposed different solutions. Some Catholic critics denounced capitalism and democracy in general or only specific side effects of both systems (the usual object of political criticism was the demagoguery and hypocrisy that accompanied elections). As a remedy, the critics sometimes offered the idea of a better democracy ("integral democracy," "qualitative democracy"), or some kind of idealized pre-modern political order (often, but not always, connected with the restoration of monarchy), or some version of a new political system, amalgamating positive aspects of both capitalism and socialism and avoiding the negative (e.g., Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc's "distributism"). Nonetheless, despite the variety of terms and symbols used, almost all of these projects shared an inclination to authoritarianism and a sympathy for the different authoritarian parties and regimes of interwar Europe, even when these parties and regimes were not Catholic. Therefore, these campaigns against the political and economic systems of the time can be described as a kind of "Catholic authoritarianism," or even, in very specific cases, as a "Catholic fascism," although this last term must be used with caution to avoid incorrect generalizations.¹³

This essay will focus on this last aspect of Czech Catholic culture—the inclination toward anti-democratic movements. Because the

subject is controversial, it is necessary to start with a review of the existing literature. Research on the topic has been sharply biased. One approach to these Catholic authors has been to make *a priori* criticisms based on their anti-democratic statements. They criticized democracy, therefore, they deserve nothing else than condemnation. It is enough to simply quote some of their insolent sentences to prove their guilt.¹⁴ On the other hand, Czech Catholic journalists today defend these authors of the interwar or war years, seeking to offer apologies for “our people” at all costs.¹⁵ Thus the research in this area of Czech cultural history remains ideologically influenced. Recently, non-polemical research has been done by Jiří Hanuš and Petr Fiala, who focus on the relation of the Catholic Church to both Nazi and communist totalitarianism rather than attempting to show some Catholic provenance of Czech authoritarianism.¹⁶ The only appropriate way to approach these controversial authors is to take a similar, non-ideological approach and interpret them in the context of the time.

The first step in such an approach is to understand the difference between the position of Catholicism *before* the direct experience with Nazi and/or communist totalitarianism and *afterward*. Before the encounter with Nazism and communism, when capitalism, liberalism, and parliamentary democracy appeared to many Catholics to be the worst possible political and social environment for them, representatives of Catholic culture stood unreconciled to the larger society and viewed the social and political order with increasing criticism. They viewed capitalism and liberalism as having destroyed traditional, patriarchal society, in which the Church had its natural place. Thus many Catholic intellectuals looked for an alternative to these destructive systems. Any movement opposed to liberal democracy and capitalism, which proposed some alternative political and economic system, was attractive to these intellectuals, or at least worthy of examination. Catholic intellectuals in the Czech Lands and other countries in Europe saw movements on the political right *and* left as representing new, untested social and political alternatives. As far as theoretical concepts and journalistic proclamations, Catholic critics of democracy were more drawn to parties on the right, but on the practical political level, many of them distanced themselves from right-wing movements. At the same time, leftist and even communist groups were seen sometimes as opponents of Catholic authoritarianism and sometimes as allies.

Both right- and left-wing movements seemed to offer something better than disputing political parties and corrupt bourgeois politicians, moral relativism and intellectual mediocrity, scandal-centered journalism, and mass unemployment. We must emphasize therefore that the usual antagonism between left and right was not in force in this context. As paradoxical as it might seem, Catholic authoritarianism featured aspects of both right- and left-wing political thought.

It must also be noted that the interest of Czech Catholic intellectuals in groups on the right and left represented not only their disillusionment with liberal democracy and capitalism but also a rejection of established Catholic politics and the Church leadership. In the Czech Lands during the interwar decades, the Catholic hierarchy and the Czechoslovak People's Party (*Československá strana lidová*), led by the priest Jan Šrámek, took a conciliatory stance toward the republic. The People's Party integrated itself into the Czechoslovak political system, with its representatives taking part in most governments and, at the end of the 1930s, supporting President Edvard Beneš against the right-wing opposition.¹⁷ However, this "official" Catholicism had almost no support among Catholic intellectuals and no resonance in Catholic cultural circles. The only outstanding intellectual of the time involved with pro-republic policies was Alfred Fuchs, a Jewish convert and priest who was later killed by the Nazis.¹⁸ The majority of Catholic artists and intellectuals stood elsewhere: on the side of critics of the republic's capitalist and liberal order as well as Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk's humanist (and pro-Protestant) ideology. Consequently, they sided either with the left, close to the communists, or with the right, close to the Fascists.

One example of this anti-democratic criticism and alliance with movements on the right and left can be found in essays of novelist Jaroslav Durych (1886–1962). Durych had an extraordinary place in interwar Czech culture.¹⁹ In the 1920s, when an anti-Catholic climate prevailed in Czech society, he was the only writer who persistently identified himself as a Catholic and was still respected on the contemporary literary scene (one advocate of his work was Karel Čapek, the emblematic author of Masarykian democracy).²⁰ Durych received the State Prize for Literature for *Bloudění* (Wandering, 1929), one of several historical novels he published that fit in the genre of the "Catholic novel." He also published essays and articles on religious or political

themes, written in an extraordinary and personal style, full of drastic provocations and ironic comments that were often incomprehensible to ordinary readers but fascinating to his admirers and imitators. Durych published many of these pieces in the journal *Rozmach* (Breakthrough), which he founded in 1923, after he had been sacked from the daily newspaper *Lidové listy*. The owner of this paper, the Czechoslovak People's Party, considered Durych's taunts politically inopportune and incompatible with the party's conciliatory strategy. Hence, after his departure from *Lidové listy*, Durych turned his criticism against the state and larger society as well as Catholics who cooperated with the government.

Durych had been enthusiastic about the new Czechoslovak state, which he consistently called the "Czech Empire" (*česká říše*). He dreamt of the state taking on the "heritage of St. Vojtěch"²¹ and extending a spiritual as well as political influence into Poland, Hungary, even Ukraine and Russia. But the everyday politics of the republic upset him. By the mid-1920s, Durych was publishing fierce criticisms of the state, writing in the style of parodies and grotesques or crossing unexpectedly from seriousness to irony and back.²² For instance, his essay "Demokracie" (*Rozmach*, 1924) starts with the serious comment that, immediately after the founding of the republic in 1918, people had believed that the word "democracy" was a saving virtue in itself. But according to Durych, the word had not yet become flesh. The essay then crosses to the farcical:

Freedom of elections could be possible in these conditions only: It would be necessary to dissolve all head offices of all political parties, to intern their leaders under military inspection, ... and to punish any campaign according to martial law. Then the elections would be announced. But any candidacy would be prohibited. Nobody would be free to apply for a mandate under threat of imprisonment. The people themselves would search for anybody worthy of trust... But what are called today "elections" are not elections—they are only comedy.²³

Durych's most vigorous attacks were aimed at the pro-Catholic parties. He explained that he attacked the centrist People's Party from the standpoint of a Catholic and the more conservative National Demo-

cratic Party (Národní demokracie) as a nationalist. But in principle, Durych detested all political parties, seeing their influence in society as negative. He even saw partisan politics as adversely affecting cultural life. Durych argued that the entire Czech literary scene was practically dependent on politics, since almost all the publishing houses and media organizations belonged to parties. The result was that the parties, rather than writers and editors, determined what was published. Literature was supposed to be independent, he complained, "but this [was] only partially true ... In practice, the political parties usurp definitive control over writers contributing to their presses." Moreover, he added, "Each political party regards itself as a highest authority in matters of art and considers as art only that which is published under its protection; anything 'foreign' is regarded as worthless." Consequently, there was no Czech literature. Instead, Durych described a fractured environment of "National Democratic literature, National Socialist literature, Agrarian literature, People's Party literature, Social Democratic literature, and Communist literature."²⁴

Contemptuous of this partisan influence in society and culture, Durych looked for alternatives. He looked first to the left. The sympathy that Durych and other Czech Catholics had towards communism might seem surprising if we compare the Czech situation with that in other East European countries or Germany. Yet it is less surprising if we keep in mind the strong social-justice motif in modern European (and American) Catholicism. Popular Catholic fiction throughout Europe, including Czech Catholic literature of the nineteenth century, strongly criticized the wealthy and the entire capitalist order.²⁵ Some leading Catholic intellectuals went even further: French writers like *Félicité de Lamennais*, *Léon Bloy*, and *Charles Péguy*, and the American journalist *Dorothy Day*, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, advocated variants of radical religious anarchism, syndicalism, or communism.²⁶ The ideas of Bloy were particularly important in the Czech context. Extremely popular among Czech Catholic intellectuals, the French author's works became a substantial part of the mental background of almost all leading Czech Catholic writers of the early twentieth century.²⁷

This attention to capitalism and the influence of religious anarchism was clearly evident in Durych's writings. Durych gained a reputation for provocative declarations against liberal democracy and capitalism. Responding to a 1924 poll by the pro-Masaryk journal

Přítomnost, in which leading writers of the time answered the question, “Why I am not a Communist,” Durych was the only contributor who did not express a fundamental objection to the ideology. Instead, he answered that he was not a communist only because the movement was still in a “transitional phase.” Its work was important, he wrote appreciatively, for it was helping to destroy the old bourgeois world. “The Bolshevik revolution has undertaken the work of destroying, and that work was great,” he explained. In this destruction, he added, “communism has shown a lack of sentimentality, and that is something I must admit with respect.”²⁸ The editors of *Přítomnost* refused to publish this response, and Karel Čapek, co-organizer of the poll, wrote an admonishment to Durych: “Apparently, you would like to become a martyr to your irony once again. You are longing to be an object of people’s badmouthing.”²⁹ Although his response to *Přítomnost* was somewhat ironic, Durych had expressed, in a more “serious” manner, his attraction to communism. In a 1922 article for *Lidové listy* (written before his departure from the paper), Durych described communism as a step before the portal to the Kingdom of God. Communism represented a challenge to the world, a challenge to return to true Christianity. The Kingdom of God would be transferred from palaces to mineshafts and workshops, Durych claimed. Communism was a step toward that goal, but a new, purified Christianity would bring its realization.³⁰

Durych tried to integrate two utopias—Christian and communist—but already in 1924 he began to reveal his skepticism. More and more, he wrote, communism was becoming an ordinary political party and losing its initial purity. “The surface of communism is terribly doctrinaire, criminal, materialist, gray, mad and awful.”³¹ In a later article Durych expressed his total disappointment: “A capitalist and a communist: They are only the opposite sides of the same coin, which is false... A capitalist and even a prelate can live in peace with communism, but a poor man, a working man, never.”³²

Despite his objections to the communist movement, the leftist bias in Durych’s thought gave birth to one of the main lines of his fiction and even his own aesthetic theory. Durych rejected contemporary approaches to “proletarian art”; according to him, all were artificial and would never be accepted by real proletarians, who instead prefer their folk love songs.³³ Further, there was no real, poor hero in so-called proletarian art. A genuine “aesthetics of poverty” had to be discovered.

Durych charged that "the only possible proletarian culture is the culture of the beautiful Czech dwelling, for this is the beauty of the poor, from the poor, and for the poor."³⁴ This aesthetics of poverty was substantially connected with religion. According to Durych, poverty was the human position particularly loved and preferred by God, for both the Son of God as well as the Mother of God had been poor. Consequently, each man or woman in poverty had some traits of Christ or Mary. Further still, Durych connected a third value to poverty and religiosity, namely eroticism. The beauty of a poor, devout girl represented for Durych the unique, universal principle and purpose of art. It was the "trace of Paradise," of an ideal human condition.³⁵ Durych's fiction was built on this theory.³⁶ The poor girl who was pure, merciful, beautiful, and ready to give of herself—even to the point of her own destruction—was the main character in much of Durych's fiction. This character corresponded with the archetype of the poor Catholic maiden, as represented in the hagiography of Saint Therese of Lisieux (Durych was a devoted admirer) and in the title character of Léon Bloy's *La Femme pauvre* (The Poor Woman, 1897), one of the most influential French Catholic novels for Czech writers.

Other Czech writers and poets, younger than Durych and starting their careers in the 1920s, expressed a similar aesthetics of poverty with religious themes. Unlike Durych, these writers—Jiří Wolker, Zdeněk Kalista, and Jaroslav Seifert, later winner of the Nobel Prize—were much closer to communism than Catholicism. In fact, most were active members of the Communist Party. But in their attempts at "perfect poetry," they frequently used Catholic symbols and motifs. The purpose and manner of their use of religious elements did vary. For example, in his book *Město v slzách* (City in Tears, 1921), Seifert used religious motifs as allegories for the details of everyday life ("The gallery in the tenement house is the arms of Virgin Mary"³⁷), while in the short story of Jaroslav Hůlka, "Bůh" [God], the ties between religious and communist dogma are explicit. In Hůlka's story, God is a capitalist, Joseph and Mary are his workers, and their son takes the name "Revolution." In the early poems of Jiří Wolker and Zdeněk Kalista, on the other hand, revolutionary and religious symbols are mixed in a kind of amalgam, and the reader cannot differentiate between what is meant seriously and what is metaphor. This connection of what was assumed to be irreconcilable is justified through the stylization of the

poet as a pure, naïve boy, who only has the right to believe both in God and in Revolution.³⁸ But this poetry linking religious and revolutionary themes flourished for only a short time. The boys became men and had to choose whether to remain on the side of communism and leave the religious symbolism, or keep the religious themes and leave communism. Wolker and Seifert chose the first option. The most notable examples of the second were Kalista, who, after turning from communism, became a famous historian of Bohemian Baroque literature (and later was imprisoned for ten years by the communist government), and prose writer Karel Schulz, whose spectacular Catholic novel *Kamen a bolest* [The Stone and the Pain, 1943] praised the abstract poor man as the preeminent object of God's love.

Coexistence and cooperation between Catholic and communist writers reappeared in the 1930s. With this next generation of writers, there were more personal ties among the writers in both camps. Communist writers published in Catholic journals and Catholics in leftist journals, and many friendships developed across the ideological borderline. For instance, two leading Czech poets of the 1930s, the communist František Halas and the Catholic Jan Zahradníček, lived together in a one-room flat decorated with Zahradníček's icon of the Virgin Mary and Halas's icon of Lenin.³⁹ These communist and Catholic writers also shared interests in literary styles and themes; representatives of both sides subscribed to ideas of pure poetry and wrote metaphysical poetry concerned with the existential questions of time, silence, death, and vanity.⁴⁰ In addressing these questions, Catholic and communist writers insisted *fundamentally* on their respective political and/or religious opinions, yet these basic differences in philosophy did not exclude the many interconnections of individual personalities and literary works. These links enriched Czech literature immensely, making the 1930s a golden period of Czech poetry.

In summing up the relationship between Catholic intellectuals and the left, we can see four main points of connection. First, the anti-capitalist elements in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Catholic thought inclined intellectuals to socialist ideas; second, Catholics had a utopian and "platonian" sympathy towards communism, which they idealized as a completely new force that promised to destroy the bourgeois order; third, young communist writers integrated Christian and revolutionary symbolism in their texts; and finally, writers from

both sides established personal friendships. Yet despite these literary and personal connections, the mutual sympathy between Catholic and communist writers diminished over the course of the 1930s. Why? An answer must be found in the broader European context. In the 1930s, across Europe, Catholics were distracted from leftist political enthusiasms and the artistic vanguard and instead tended to more conservative and—often, if not necessarily—spiritual thought, art, and politics. At the same time, changes in the communist camp brought a turn on the other side: Stalinism ended the experimentation of the 1920s, replacing it with revived Russian nationalism, imperialism, bureaucracy, and socialist realism in the arts. While the revolutionary, utopian atmosphere of the 1920s had enticed artists, this more "realistic" form of communism held no attractiveness for Catholic thinkers and writers. With this change on the left, and with the turn of Catholic intellectuals increasingly to the right, political affinity between writers on both sides became impossible, even if they still had a common enemy in bourgeois society.

This other alternative, the connection of Catholics to the political right, brought much less literary fruit. But before we explore these ties, we must ask what is meant by the terms "right" or "far right." It is an error to suppose that the "far right" in interwar Czechoslovakia was unified. Prince Karel Schwarzenberg, a leading figure in Czech Catholic circles, once stated in his diaries that when he tried to make a summary of the Czech political right, he counted twenty-five different groups.⁴¹ Nevertheless, these groups had some political and social ideas in common. First, the nation was the leading principle, as opposed to both capitalist and socialist internationalism. Second, the various movements on the right advocated a corporatist order. It was expected that "corporations," as organizations of people active in the same field (workers and manufacturers of certain products together, landowners and peasants, intellectuals, and so on), would administer both political and economic life through their representatives, and replace the hegemony of the political parties and liberal capitalists. Catholic intellectuals viewed both ideas favorably. Pope Pius XI had sanctioned Catholics' adherence to anti-capitalism and corporatism with the 1931 encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*, which rejected economic liberalism and explicitly advocated a corporatist order.⁴² Consequently, those Catholics who sided with right-wing groups and parties in attempts to intro-

duce a corporatist state could claim that they were fulfilling the will of the Holy Father.

But the question can then be asked: Was advocacy of corporatism an opening for Catholic support of fascism? Certainly there was nothing in the papal encyclical about the building of a single-party, totalitarian state. On the other hand, the encyclical was written in Italy at the height of the Fascist state, whose relation to the Holy See was—or seemed to be—increasingly positive. This context cannot be left out of a discussion of the encyclical's background. In the "totalitarian state" of Italian Fascism, the Church—as many Catholics and Fascists recognized—was a hindrance. In other European countries, however, Catholics believed that the Church could take a leading place in the corporatist state. In reality, this was not the case. Catholicism provided a symbolic language of national identity for many far-right movements, but in no case—neither in Action Française, nor in the Austrian Heimwehr, nor in the Spanish Falange—did Catholicism take a dominant position in the movement's ideology. Catholicism was only *one* of many symbols used in these movements, freely combined with expressions like "soil," "nation," "race," "tradition," "myth," "brotherhood," and others, according to each national context. And like these other terms, Catholicism was often a political slogan, rather than a statement of religious belief. For instance, Charles Maurras, the ideologist of Action Française, claimed Catholicism as a synonym for "Latinity, Classicism and Rationalism," although he was not personally religious—to the despair of many of his Catholic followers.⁴³

A similar relationship could be observed between certain Czech Catholics and groups on the right. Catholics hoped to act as missionaries in these movements, to "baptize" the right. But their hopes were in vain. Secular leaders maintained their hold on the groups and their ideologies, leaving Catholics with two apparent options—either stop their engagement, or play a supporting role—and thus help legitimize the movements. In looking at the attractiveness of far-right ideas and movements for Czech Catholics, and how troublesome their cooperation was on a practical level, we can look to two figures: Karel Schwarzenberg and, once again, Jaroslav Durych.

Durych's writings in the journal *Rozmach* have been discussed as an example of leftist sympathies. But in the late 1920s, *Rozmach* also found allies in the nascent Czech Fascist movement. While seemingly

illogical, the inclination to both right and left arose from the same anti-bourgeois, anti-capitalist fervor. The Catholic intellectuals involved with *Rozmach* were willing to ally with either side, whether fascists or communists, in the struggle to destroy the middle-class order. This virulent anti-capitalist, anti-liberal direction of *Rozmach* was evident in the provocative, spectacular use of military metaphors in its pages. *Rozmach* presented itself as the companion journal to a modern order of knights. Durych and other writers called for a renaissance of national self-confidence and the national tradition—in its Catholic version. Responding to the language of conflict and imagery of knighthood, contemporary Czech journalists saw in *Rozmach* nothing less than a Catholic version of fascism, and the direct association of the journal's contributors with rightist groups seemed to confirm the charge. The second-most frequent contributor to *Rozmach* after Durych, Jan Scheinost, did become a member and even general secretary of the Czech National Fascist Community (*Národní obec fašistická*). Durych, however, denied any connection between *Rozmach* and the Czech Fascists or fascism in general. In his 1927 article "Rozmach a fašismus," Durych insisted that, first of all, Fascism was a purely Italian matter. The Czech variant was, in his judgment, intellectually futile. Moreover, Czech Fascists were on the path to becoming a political party, which was anathema to him. Durych declared that, above all, he was a Catholic. He refused any other affiliation because only this one was necessary.⁴⁴

Durych's declaration signaled his hope for a *fourth path* between liberalism, communism, and fascism: a fourth path that would be offered and represented by Catholicism. Yet while Durych wanted an alternative course for the state, he could not identify any real political force that could make this fourth path a reality. He set down a "negative" program, in his fierce criticism of the republic, his rejection of communism, and his refusal to associate *Rozmach* with the platform of the Czech Fascists, but he had no "positive" program to offer, no new option for Catholic political engagement.

In 1927, the same year as he denied *Rozmach*'s association with fascism, Durych voluntarily closed the journal. His former colleague, Jan Scheinost, went on to set up another journal the following year: *Stěžeň: Měsíčník pro fašismus*.⁴⁵ The question must be asked: why did Durych so adamantly refuse to take part in any organized political

movement, to the point of ceasing publication of his journal? Durych was strong in his criticism of the republic, but he was unable to formulate an integral program for the change of society and the state. Perhaps he did not want to offer any positive program, for any program would have represented some kind of compromise. Durych, after all, longed for an ideal without compromise (see, for example, the repeated motif of lost Paradise in his poetry). Thus, he stopped and stood firm at the boundary of organized politics. We can draw a parallel between Durych's strategy and that of later anti-communist dissidents in Czechoslovakia and other East European countries, including the East German Christian opposition discussed in this volume by Katharina Kunter. Anti-communist intellectuals—believers and nonbelievers—saw the purpose of their engagement as a “negative” activity, i.e., a criticism of the prevailing order. After 1989, however, they were wary of taking part in organized political groups, or, in some cases, they were unable to conform their ideals to the post-socialist political reality.

One example of a Czech Catholic intellectual who did try to cross the border into politics was Prince Karl Schwarzenberg (1911–1986). Scion of one of the most wealthy and powerful aristocratic families in Bohemia, Schwarzenberg came of age in a newly founded republic that acted from the start to eliminate the privileges of the nobility. Among the first measures passed by the new Czechoslovak state were the law abolishing aristocratic titles and the land-reform statutes that aimed to break former estates.⁴⁶ Schwarzenberg retained ownership over vast forest lands and hence studied forestry in Prague, but his true interest was history. As a student, Schwarzenberg was a diligent reader of Durych as well as Charles Maurras and Spanish legitimists, such as nineteenth-century writer Juan Donoso Cortés. And beginning in the mid-1930s, he emerged as a skilled essay writer in Catholic journals, although the young prince, alert to the Czech animus toward the nobility and prohibited from using his title in the public, published his texts under pseudonyms. In the cultural revue *Řád* [Order], Schwarzenberg published essays in a Chestertonian style under the pseudonym “Jindřich Sředa.” The key idea in these essays was liberty. Schwarzenberg argued that the proclaimed liberty in the modern liberal state was not real. Instead, it was but a formal liberty that left humans defenseless before the almighty state. In traditional, feudal states, on the other hand, man was protected within a system of liberties ensured by com-

munities, guilds, and fraternities. In the journal *Vlajka* [Banner], by contrast, Schwarzenberg wrote more explicit political texts that offered a program of national rejuvenation. His choice of pseudonym, "Bojna," indicated his program (at least, for those who would have understood the reference): a *bojna* was the traditional Basque cap that symbolized Spanish legitimism. The style of Bojna's writings for *Vlajka* is more deserving of examination than the naïve arguments they contained. The texts were full of ardent calls, characteristic of a twenty-two-year-old student, with a prevailing mood of ecstatic joy. This joy, similar to the tone of Durych's *Rozmach*, conveyed the idea of a "noble fraternity," an enthusiastic, shared effort that would be able to solve all of society's problems. Bojna/Schwarzenberg wrote in 1934:

We are going to resolve the cultural chaos by virtue of Christian culture. We are going to solve everything in the spirit of our national history and according to the needs of the future. Our national red-and-white flag is going to fly higher and higher, adorned with the Slavic linden, twined with the Slavic tricolor. Where do you want to go, you graybeards? Are you goat-beards going to stop our march?⁴⁷

Vlajka was not only a journal but a political movement as well. To contemporary Czechs, the word "Vlajka" has a negative ring. Owing to the organization's activities under the Nazi occupation, it has become associated with collaboration in the wartime protectorate. However, this second version of *Vlajka* was different in both personnel and ideology from the *Vlajka* of the 1930s. Initially, *Vlajka* stood for a pan-Slavic Czech nationalism and the idea of a corporatist order, and attacked liberalism, Marxism, and German Nazism.⁴⁸ Thus *Vlajka* in the 1930s represented, theoretically, the fourth path that Czech Catholic intellectuals sought.

Schwarzenberg joined this movement, and in his writings as Bojna, he fashioned himself as its leader. Bojna referred to Action Française and suggested that this movement should be the model for *Vlajka*—and that he would be the Czech Charles Maurras. But Schwarzenberg/Bojna, a student at Charles University at the time, was unable to set down a clear program for the movement and compel his fellow members, who were also mostly students, to follow. Schwarzenberg

recognized that his dream of a noble fraternity of modern knights was incompatible with the practical demands of a right-wing political organization in 1930s Europe. His first concern was the group's ideology. Members of Vlájka were Czech nationalists who opposed Masarykian humanism and bourgeois liberalism, but they did support the existence of the Czechoslovak Republic. In contrast, Schwarzenberg/Bojna's philosophy, although naïve, was consistent: Catholic legitimism. He argued that neither nationalism nor the corporatist order by themselves could solve the problems of modern society. Solutions could be built only upon historical tradition, namely the tradition of the Catholic Czech kingdom, which had lasted more than one thousand years and had created a firm frame for relations between classes and nationalities. Schwarzenberg was therefore, unlike Durych, unambiguous toward the Czechoslovak state; he was a confirmed monarchist. In his diaries, Schwarzenberg wrote his hopes for transforming Vlájka into a monarchist movement—and also his disappointment as his comrades held to republicanism. "I have not yet converted them to my faith," he admitted at one point. He saw this lack of converts as a symptom of the ideological confusion of the 1930s: "Everywhere the mental chaos is terrible. I went to the university, then again into Vlájka. I tried to convert the people to royalism—with scanty success."⁴⁹

It is noteworthy that in these diary entries of 1933–1934, Schwarzenberg started to use the Latin word for flag, *vexillum*, instead of the Czech *vlajka*. The word *vexillum* has religious and liturgical associations; specifically, it is an allusion to the medieval hymn of Venantius Fortunatus, "Vexilla regis prodeunt" [The flags of the king proceed]. The choice of the Latin word for use in his diary thus illustrated the depth of Schwarzenberg's idealism; he put his hope in the liturgy, the king, and Christ as King, instead of the realities of politics. During the mid-1930s this idealism separated Schwarzenberg more and more from the general direction of Vlájka. Unlike others in the movement, Schwarzenberg denounced the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, which he saw as a legitimate, even ancient Catholic state. He also came to criticize the nationalist side in the Spanish Civil War. No doubt, Schwarzenberg was enthusiastic for the insurrection against the republic, but he clearly discerned the differences between the Carlist legitimists and the Falangists, who appeared to him as too pragmatic and too dependent on "pagan" Nazi Germany. "Falangists are nationalists of every

sort, admirers of Italy and Germany," he wrote as Bojna. "Traditionalists know perfectly well that dictatorship cannot be a real form of state but an emergency form only, and that [Nazi] Germany, especially considering its anti-Catholicism, cannot be an enduring ally of Spain. Thus, a great educational work is needed to teach all the un-thinking nationalists about the full traditional program, which is the only program connecting authority and liberty."⁵⁰

But as Franco's brutality increasingly prevailed in Spain, while the Carlists were used and misused for his purposes, Vlajka itself tended more toward a belligerent right-wing movement, with members adopting a vulgar antisemitism and taking to brawls in the streets. Instead of a noble fraternity, Vlajka became a band of riff-raff. Instead of legitimacy and historical traditionalism, the movement's members devoted energy to demonstrating the authenticity of the forged medieval manuscripts that had been icons of nineteenth-century Czech nationalists (and which Masaryk had dismissed as inauthentic) and to proving Masaryk's supposed Jewish origins. With the difference in opinions insuperable, Schwarzenberg decided to leave Vlajka. At the end of 1937, the name Bojna disappeared from the pages of the movement's journal.

Ironically, in the summer and autumn of 1938, the name Schwarzenberg began to appear in Vlajka's journal. This time, Schwarzenberg was no longer the writer, but was instead the object of political speculations. His name became the flag that Vlajka unfurled in the hope of gaining political power at Czechoslovakia's time of crisis. As one of the movement's members declared, "In the chaos of these days... the name of a member of an old, patriotic Bohemian family, Karel Schwarzenberg, is sounding more and more notable and strong."⁵¹ The idea that the state would "flourish with Schwarzenberg" was held not only by the right-wing fringe. The aristocratic name Schwarzenberg, which had ambiguous associations in the Masarykian republic of the 1920s and early 1930s, gained popularity amidst the crises of 1938 and was discussed in the mainstream press as well as nationalist journals.⁵² The impulse for this interest in Schwarzenberg was the "Declaration of Bohemian Nobility," presented to President Beneš on September 17, 1938.⁵³ Karel Schwarzenberg composed the document and organized its signing as the expression of the fidelity of noble Bohemian families (regardless of Czech, German, or other origin) to the independent Czech state in its historical borders. As the autumn became more tur-

bulent, with the loss of territory as a result of the Munich Agreement, and Beneš's resignation and departure to England, Schwarzenberg appeared as one figure who could restore stability. But any political ambitions Schwarzenberg had were undone by the links with his former allies in Vlajka. Even though he had broken from the group and Vlajka's endorsement of him came without his consent, Schwarzenberg recognized that he had no political future after the organization nominated him for the vacant presidency in a Czech-language broadcast from Nazi-occupied Vienna in October 1938. Schwarzenberg saw that his only option was to reject Vlajka immediately and decisively and to cease his political activity. Consequently, he turned away from politics and concentrated on his research and religious activities.⁵⁴ This short episode in autumn 1938 proved to be the only moment when a prominent Catholic, seeking a fourth path between liberalism, communism, and Nazism, was so near to the leading position in the Czechoslovak state.

This short overview discusses only a few of the figures and movements in the broad spectrum of Czech Catholic political thought and activism in the early twentieth century. Schwarzenberg and Durych were representative figures whose writings showed common ideas. They were similar in their romantic individualism paired with a longing for regenerative camaraderie (most evident in their shared idea of a brotherhood of knights), and in both cases their idealism came to the same outcome: disappointment and withdrawal. But Schwarzenberg's and Durych's writings and careers also had notable differences. Durych dreamt of a kind of theocracy, albeit without any definite traits, while Schwarzenberg envisioned the return of an idealized medieval aristocratism. The former expressed limited sympathies for both communism and fascism in the 1920s, the latter only for fascism in the 1930s (a key reason for this difference, apart from the changing face of communism from the 1920s to the 1930s, were the class backgrounds of Durych, a military physician, and the nobleman Schwarzenberg). And while Durych limited his attention as a political writer mainly to the Czechoslovak context (with the exception of his comments on the Spanish Civil War), Schwarzenberg constantly searched for inspiration in Western Europe, above all in France and Spain. But this attention to movements outside of Czechoslovakia only increased Schwarzenberg's disillusionment, as he watched representatives of Action Française, including Maurras, take part in the establishment of the Vichy régime

and Franco introduce a personal dictatorship instead of the promised legitimist kingdom in Spain.

Disillusionment was common among Catholic intellectuals who sought a fourth path among the ideologies of the interwar period. Whether they watched favored movements abroad drift further toward brutish authoritarianism, as did Schwarzenberg, or refused to commit themselves at all to any political program, like Durych, Catholics seeking to navigate amidst liberalism, communism, and fascism were left only with dashed hopes. But why did the search for a "fourth path" fail? First of all, the schemes of these intellectuals lacked any contact with the political and economic realities of the twentieth century and offered no practical programs. When attempts were made at introducing a non-democratic but non-totalitarian state, with Catholicism as the state ideology, such as in Spain or Portugal, the reality of the regimes in power was completely different from the enthusiastic programs of the early movements. Second, any movement based upon the idea of a fourth path was unable to withstand the force of Nazi Germany. We see this in Austria as well as Czechoslovakia. In the latter case, the so-called "Second Republic," in existence from the Munich Agreement (October 1938) to the German occupation (March 1939), was an attempt at an anti-liberal but non-authoritarian state. The result was shameful: the Second Republic was so parlous, so beset by German pressure, and so blackened by the worst sort of belligerent journalism and outbursts of antisemitism that the idea of a corporatist state or a fourth path was forever discredited in the Czech Lands. The attempt at a non-liberal but non-fascist conservative state came to nothing, or more precisely speaking, to its submission to Nazi Germany. Neither Dolfuss and Schuschnigg, nor Pétain and Maurras, nor the leaders of the Second Republic and, later, Jozef Tiso in Slovakia were able to defend their corporatist and nationalist states against Hitler. Consequently, the discourse of corporatism, including its more or less Catholic elements, became completely unacceptable after World War II. In addition, the survival of the Franco and Salazar dictatorships in Spain and Portugal ensured that no Catholic in Europe could cite the corporatist (or syndicalist) state as a positive model. Everything situated to the right of liberal democracy was labeled "fascist." In the Czechoslovak context, both Durych and Schwarzenberg were branded in the press as such after 1945 (despite Schwarzenberg's part in orga-

nizing the anti-Nazi uprising in May 1945) because they had opposed Masarykian liberal democracy from the right. Following the Communist seizure of power in 1948, Schwarzenberg saved himself from prosecution only by escaping to Austria, while Durych was prohibited from publishing any new texts, and his books were removed from public libraries. Dozens of other Catholic intellectuals were imprisoned by the Communist government.

In looking back at this complicated and not very glorious chapter in the history of Catholic political thought, the observer can easily denounce the errors of these journalists, writers, and activists. However, if history can offer instruction to the present, two points should not be forgotten. First, the “negative” part of these intellectuals’ “Catholic authoritarian” programs, namely their criticism of liberal democracy and capitalism, was a reaction to the real flaws of those systems. Although the “positive” part of their program, the economic and social projects of the corporatist state, seems absurd today, the critical arguments of Catholic writers in the 1920s and 1930s still have resonance, for the flaws of democracy and capitalism they recognized have not disappeared. Consequently, in the effort to improve market economies and liberal democratic states, the texts of these pre-World War II critics deserve attention rather than dismissal. And secondly, with a new political and cultural confrontation emerging, that of western liberalism and the perceived threat of Islam, Catholic intellectuals and politicians are engaged in a debate on the future of Europe, with religion again central to the debate. There is no doubt that neither fascism nor communism will be real political alternatives. But what kinds of new movements or new political thinking might develop? And will Christians of Europe attempt to steer amidst the various conflicting parties and ideas, or will they be forced to choose a side to stand on?

NOTES

- 1 See René Rémond, *Religion et société en Europe aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles. Essai sur la sécularisation* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1996).
- 2 See Gene Kellogg, *The Vital Tradition: The Catholic Novel in a Period of Convergence* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1970).

- 3 In the Czech literary context, this aphorism is connected with the name of Graham Greene, although its origin is probably earlier. See Graham Greene, *Paradox křesťanství* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1970), 47.
- 4 Representative of these efforts was the volume *Katholische Leistung in der Weltliteratur der Gegenwart* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1934), which featured separate chapters on Catholic writers in different countries or regions, including Scandinavia, the Low Countries, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia, and Croatia. Among the writers discussed in the chapter on Czechoslovakia were Josef Florian, Jakub Deml, Jaroslav Durych, Jan Čep, and Jan Zahradníček.
- 5 See Kellogg, *The Vital Tradition*; J.C. Whitehouse, *Vertical Man: The Human Being in the Catholic Novels of Graham Greene, Sigrid Undset, and Georges Bernanos* (New York: Garland, 1990); and Theodore P. Fraser, *The Modern Catholic Novel in Europe* (New York: Twayne, 1994).
- 6 Albert Fuss, "Der Renouveau catholique und seine Rezeption in Deutschland," in Anton Rauscher, ed., *Religiös-kulturelle Bewegungen im deutschen Katholizismus seit 1800* (Munich: Schöningh, 1986), 137–168.
- 7 Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Maria Cross: Imaginative Patterns in a Group of Catholic Authors* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952).
- 8 See Martin C. Putna, "Místo osobností z protestantského prostředí v české kultuře po roce 1918," *Lidé města*, no. 3 (2008): 45–82.
- 9 See Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, *Světová revoluce* (Prague: Orbis a Čin, 1925).
- 10 Henri Bremond, *La poésie pure* (Paris: Grasset, 1926); and *Prière et poésie* (Paris: Grasset, 1926).
- 11 One Catholic historical novel, Karel Schulz's *Kámen a bolest* (1943), caused a long journalistic controversy between "moralistic critics," who accused Schulz of "immorality," and those Catholic critics who stressed the freedom of the artist. See Mojmír Trávníček, "Kámen a bolest v korespondenci Jana Zahradníčka a Jana Čepa," in *Sdílet věčné* (Olomouc: Periplum, 2002), 141–158.
- 12 Jacek Bartyzel, "Umierać, ale powoli!" in *O monarchistycznej i katolickiej kontrrewolucji w krajach romańskich 1815–2000* (Krakow: Arcana, 2006). In addition, certain Orthodox variants existed as well, particularly among Russian emigrés, especially in France, and in Romania.
- 13 On "Catholic fascism," see Hermann Dorowin, *Retter des Abendlandes: Kulturkritik im Vorfeld des europäischen Faschismus* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1991).
- 14 Jan Rataj, *O autoritativní národní stát. Ideologické proměny české politiky v druhé republice 1938–1939* (Prague: Karolinum, 1997); and Jan Gebhart and Jan Kuklík, *Druhá republika 1938–1939: Svár demokracie a totality* (Prague: Paseka, 2004).
- 15 Jiří Olič, *Čtení o Jakubu Demlovi* (Olomouc: Votobia, 1993); and Jaroslav Med, "Jaroslav Durych—fašista?" *Literární noviny* 5, no. 26 (1994): 7.

- 16 Petr Fiala and Jiří Hanuš, eds., *Katolická církev a totalitarismus v českých zemích* (Brno: CDK, 2001).
- 17 Josef Doležal, *Politická cesta čs. katolicismu 1918–1928* (Prague: Nákladem Ústředí katolických jednot, 1928); and Miloš Trapl, *Politika českého katolicismu na Moravě 1918–1938* (Prague: SPN, 1968).
- 18 Alfred Fuchs was among many Jewish journalists and writers, whether religious, secular, or Zionist, who enthusiastically identified with the republic and the politics of President T.G. Masaryk. Fuchs, however, was a target of mockery for other Catholic intellectuals. They did not trust his conversion, which they judged as too showy, and they found his writing too superficial. Indeed, his writing is more journalistic than literary, but it cannot be denied that antisemitic prejudices lay at the root of this criticism. Nevertheless, after he was killed by the Nazis, Fuchs was praised as a Catholic martyr. Aloys Skoumal, "A. Fuchs: Oltář a rotačka," *Na hlubinu* (1931): 115; Ctibor Mařan, ed., *Kniha o Alfredu Fuchsovi* (Prague: Vyšehrad, 1946).
- 19 See Martin C. Putna, *Ľaroslav Durych* (Prague: Torst, 2003).
- 20 The other example of a widely respected Czech Catholic writer was Jakub Deml (1878–1961). A priest and poet who freely crossed literary genres, Deml had already made his literary reputation before World War I and held the respect of many modernist writers, including avant-garde leftists.
- 21 Saint Vojtěch (Adalbert) was the tenth-century bishop of Prague who went on missionary journeys to Hungary, Poland, and Prussia.
- 22 See the articles "Maškarní ples," and "České peklo," in *Rozmach* 2 (1924).
- 23 Durych, "Demokracie," in Zuzana Fialová, ed., *Ľaroslav Durych—publicista* (Prague: Academia, 2001), 180.
- 24 Durych, "Kritika české akce literární," in *Rozmach* 1 (1923): 77–78.
- 25 Jindřich Šimon Baar, "Zlato—ďábel," in František Teplý, ed., *Kázání Jindřicha Šimona Baara* vol. 3 (Přerov: Společenské podniky, 1936), 78.
- 26 See William J. Thorn, Phillip M. Runkel, and Susan Mountin, *Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2001).
- 27 Martin C. Putna, *Česká katolická literatura v evropském kontextu 1848–1918* (Prague: Torst, 1998), 355–436; and Putna, "La littérature catholique tchéque: Bohuslav Reynek et l'Apocalypse—sources et motifs," in *Essais sur le discours de l'Europe éclatée*, no. 16 (Grenoble: Centre d'études slaves contemporaines, 2000), 145–161.
- 28 Durych, "Proč nejsem komunistou," in *Ľaroslav Durych—publicista*, 188–189.
- 29 Čapek to Durych, December 1924, reprinted in Marta Dandová, "Korespondence Karla Čapka s Arne Novákem, Otorkarem Fischerem, Ľaroslavem Durychem, a Františkem Xaverem Šaldou," *Literární archiv* 24 (1990): 93–94.
- 30 Durych, "Unionismus," *Lidové listy* 1, no. 283 (1922): 1.

- 31 Durych, "První máj," in *Jaroslav Durych—publicista*, 163.
- 32 Durych, "V hadí sluji," in *Jaroslav Durych—publicista*, 227–228.
- 33 Durych defends the same thesis as his ideological opponent Karel Čapek in his book *Marsyas* (1931).
- 34 Durych, "Nobilizace a kultura proletariátu," in *Jaroslav Durych—publicista*, 136.
- 35 Durych, *Gotická růže* (Prague, 1923).
- 36 See Durych: *Tři dukáty* (Prague, 1919); *Sedmikráska* (Prague, 1925); and other texts.
- 37 Jaroslav Seifert, *Město v slzách* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1989), 37.
- 38 Martin C. Putna, "Wolker—básník náboženský?" *Souvislosti*, no. 1 (1992): 93–100.
- 39 Bedřich Fučík, *Čtrnáctero zastavení* (Prague: Melantrich, 1992), 242.
- 40 Jiří Brabec, "Poezie smrti, ticha a času," *Orientace*, no. 6 (1968): 57–62.
- 41 Personal diaries, vol. 23, September 17, 1936, Schwarzenberg Family Collection, Státní oblastní archiv, Třeboň.
- 42 *Quadragesimo anno*, §25–27 and §81–87.
- 43 Maurras converted in very last days of his life in prison. See Henri Massis, *Maurras et notre temps* (Paris: Plon, 1961).
- 44 Durych, "Rozmach a fašismus," *Rozmach* (1927): 389–406.
- 45 Ironically, Scheinost stayed with *Národní obec fašistická* only two years. He lost hope in the scheme to "baptize" the fascist group and turned back to the People's Party, in the hope of "fascicizing" it.
- 46 On the legislative measures directed against the Bohemian nobility, see Eagle Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists: The Transformation of the Bohemian Aristocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), chapter 2.
- 47 Bojna, "Včera, dnes a zítra," *Vlajka*, no. 10 (1934–35): 2.
- 48 See Milan Nakonečný, *Vlajka: K historii a ideologii českého nacionalismu* (Prague: Chvojko nakladatelství, 2001).
- 49 Personal diaries, vol. 20, March 15, 1934, and April 10, 1934, Schwarzenberg Family Collection, Státní oblastní archiv, Třeboň.
- 50 Bojna, "Cesta po Francii," *Národní výzva*, no. 24 (1937): 5.
- 51 "Kdo bude prezidentem?" *Národní výzva*, no. 41–42 (1938): 3.
- 52 Dušan Tomášek, *Deník druhé republiky* (Prague: Naše vojsko, 1988), 50.
- 53 The declaration text is reprinted in Glassheim, *Noble Nationalists*, 237–238.
- 54 Martin C. Putna, "Torzo díla Karla VI. Schwarzenberga," in Karel VI. Schwarzenberg, *Torzo díla* (Prague: Torst, 2007), 7–82.

The Roman Catholic Church Navigates the New Slovakia, 1945–1948

JAMES RAMON FELAK

Adjusting to abrupt changes in regime is nothing new for the Roman Catholic Church and its leadership. An institution that counts its age in millennia and banks on being around at the end of time has faced and plans to face a great variety of such challenges. Whether the well-known cases of the French Revolution, the unification of Italy, or the rise to power of Adolf Hitler, or the host of lesser-known examples of which history abounds, an examination of how Catholics responded to a changing political situation deepens our understanding of the Church and its relationship to the regimes under which it has operated. The case of postwar Slovakia is no exception.

This paper will examine the Church in Slovakia in the aftermath of World War II, during the three-year period between the collapse of the wartime Slovak Republic—a quasi-independent state closely allied with Nazi Germany, dominated by the Catholic and nationalist Slovak People's Party (*Hlinková slovenská ľudová strana*, hereafter HSĽS),¹ and led by the Catholic priest Jozef Tiso—and the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in the coup of February 1948. It will look at the political options available to Catholics at the time, and why the Church's leadership and membership, while initially pursuing a variety of options, nevertheless settled largely on cooperation with the Lutheran-dominated Democratic Party. This paper will argue that, in a period of communist assertiveness and aggression, in Slovakia, Czechoslovakia, and across Eastern Europe, the Catholic Church faced not only challenges that any religious institution must face in such a situation, but also challenges specifically related to the baggage it carried from the wartime period and its association with Slovak nationalism.

The years between 1938 and 1948 constituted a particularly turbulent decade in the history of Slovakia. During this period, Slovakia went from being an integral part of the centralized, parliamentary First Czechoslovak Republic, to an autonomous component of a reconstituted Czecho-Slovakia, to an independent authoritarian state closely aligned with Nazi Germany, to part of the postwar, multi-party “people’s democracy” (in which Slovakia’s autonomy progressively dwindled), to a subject region of a Stalinist dictatorship run from Prague. Religion, namely Roman Catholicism, played an especially significant role during these years. The leading Slovak nationalist party from 1918 to 1945 was the HSĽS, a priest-led party that made Catholicism a key part of its program, voicing in particular the dissatisfaction of Slovak Catholics with the Czechoslovak government’s policies towards the Church.² Taking advantage of Nazi German aggression against Czechoslovakia, the HSĽS was able to take political control of Slovakia in 1938–1939 and establish an authoritarian regime led by a Catholic priest, Jozef Tiso. Under this regime, the Roman Catholic Church received a favored position, and Catholic clergy played an important role in the country’s political life. As Slovakia became liberated from Nazi occupation in 1945, the Catholic Church, given its ties to the Tiso regime, abruptly lost political influence. Nevertheless, Catholicism itself remained a crucial issue for the next several years, as the reconstituted Czechoslovak state sought to reincorporate and reconstruct Slovakia, settle scores with the Tiso regime and its supporters, and build a “people’s democratic” regime in which the Communist Party, long-time nemesis of the Catholics, would have a decisive role.

Nearly every significant issue or development in Slovakia during the immediate postwar period had a strong religious dimension. Slovakia’s two major political parties, the Communist Party of Slovakia (*Komunistická strana Slovenska*, hereafter KSS) and the Democratic Party (*Demokratická strana*, hereafter DS), energetically vied with each other for the Catholic vote, a significant conquest in a land where approximately 80 percent of the population identified itself as Catholic.³ Efforts by the state to eliminate parochial education and confiscate church-owned land stood at or near the top of political and policy agendas, while Catholic bishops fought to defend church schools and property. Retribution trials and procedures, in particular the trial and execution of Tiso in 1947, intertwined religion, politics, nationalism,

and public passions in notable ways. For instance, the treatment of the Magyar minority in southern Slovakia had an important religious aspect, as the state was intolerant of Hungarian clergy and Hungarian-language worship. Questions of autonomy for Slovakia *vis-à-vis* the central government in Prague were colored by Czech and communist suspicions of anti-Czech, anti-communist, Catholic Slovak nationalism. Underground resistance to the new republic, both real and imagined, was heavily connected to the nationalism and religiosity of those Slovak Catholics loyal to the Tiso regime. Communists, in their efforts to destroy the Democratic Party and assume sole dominance in Slovakia, fabricated an “anti-state conspiracy” that allegedly involved high-ranking Catholic leaders in the DS. In short, religious affiliations, expressed both actively and passively, had a significant presence in the key political developments during Slovakia’s transition from life in Hitler’s empire to life in Stalin’s.

The destruction of the wartime Slovak Republic and its replacement by the people’s democratic regime of resurrected Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1945 presented Slovak Catholicism with a starkly new situation—one that carried both dangers and opportunities. In a context in which Slovak nationalism was viewed with suspicion and the HSĽS and the Tiso regime were seen as fascist collaborators with Nazi Germany, Catholicism’s close association with the wartime government, the party that ran it, and Slovak nationalism in general, made politically engaged Catholics especially vulnerable. The new government in Prague was dominated by parties that were ideologically and historically hostile either to Catholicism or Slovak nationalism, or frequently to both.⁴ Parties on the left shared an animosity toward any Catholicism but for the “progressive” type that sought accommodation with the state’s secularizing traditions. Czech parties shared a deep suspicion of Slovak nationalism. The new state, in seeking to increase its power in realms such as education, encroached on vital Catholic interests. However, despite the considerable pressure these circumstances placed on Slovakia’s Catholics, the peculiar political structure of postwar Czechoslovakia presented opportunities for them as well. When the HSĽS was banned at the war’s end, only two political parties were officially allowed to exist in Slovakia: the atheistic Communists and the Lutheran-dominated Democrats. This left much of the 80 percent of Slovakia’s Catholic population without acceptable representation. In order to be the majority

party in Slovakia, both the communists and democrats would have to gain a significant proportion of the Catholic vote. Hence, the first year of the new regime witnessed an aggressive wooing of Slovakia's Catholics by communists and democrats alike.

In terms of political activity and orientation, Catholics responded to the new situation in a number of ways. At one extreme was outright resistance, normally manifested through underground, conspiratorial activity; at the other extreme was outright collaboration with the communists. Between these extremes we find several other approaches: cooperation with the DS; efforts to establish a separate Catholic party; and the interesting attempt of an exiled Croatian priest to develop a Catholic position that transcended the political fray while exhibiting a greater suspicion of the DS than of the communists. All of these approaches found adherents among the Catholic population, including the clergy, but only cooperation with the Democratic Party received the endorsement of the Church hierarchy and the broad support of Slovakia's Catholic population. An examination of these approaches in more detail will provide explanations for why some caught on more readily than others. Given that Catholic priests continued to play a key role in Slovak political life, the essay will consider each of the strategies by closely examining the career of an individual, activist priest who was its most prominent advocate.

Outright Resistance

Catholics taking this approach were involved in underground activity—producing and distributing underground newspapers and leaflets, writing nationalistic, anti-Czech, anti-communist, anti-Jewish, and pro-Tiso slogans on public spaces under the cover of night, trying to connect with pro-Tiso émigré circles, and forming local conspiratorial groups in anticipation of an opportunity to restore Slovakia's independence under a Tisoite regime.⁵ This option was extremist, quixotic, and, given the eagerness of the security forces to root out anti-state conspiracies, dangerous. Though some priests participated on the local level, Catholic bishops refused to get involved, and leading Catholic politicians denounced it as, among other things, the work of political adventurers, provocateurs, and short-sighted youth.⁶

While normally limited to small, disparate, disunited fringe elements, pro-Tiso sentiment at times would break out into public actions. For instance, on the day Tiso's trial was concluded, over a thousand participants demonstrated in Piešťany and its vicinity, and supporters organized a postcard campaign to greet Tiso on his name day.⁷ The rapid police response to these provocations indicates that such matters were taken seriously by the authorities, giving Church leadership even more reason to eschew such activities. Nevertheless, individual priests could be found encouraging pro-Tiso activity on the local level.⁸ In terms of electoral politics, the Slovak underground urged Catholics to vote with "blank ballots," as a way to register disapproval of the regime and all parties permitted on the ballot.⁹ Overall, this approach harkened to the immediate and irretrievable past, when the Tiso regime ruled an independent Slovakia.

Collaboration with the KSS

Some Catholic priests cooperated closely with the communists. The most prominent among them was Jozef Straka, and his career deserves closer examination because he is the exemplar of this approach about whom we know the most.¹⁰ Straka joined the KSS in 1941 and was active in the Slovak National Uprising, the outbreak of armed resistance to the Tiso regime and its Nazi patrons in August and September 1944. He was a founding member of the Slavic Catholic Committee (SKV),¹¹ a communist-sponsored organization that supported Czechoslovak-Soviet friendship, "the eternal brotherhood of all Slavic nations," and represented two communist initiatives of the time: promoting Pan-Slavism and reaching out to Catholics. In the summer of 1945, Straka tried to persuade the KSS to expand its cooperation with so-called progressive clergy. He met with a party official twice at that time, arguing that there are "sincerely democratic-thinking" priests who would like to participate in building the new people's democracy within the framework of the KSS if the party was ready to support them and give them opportunities for educational work among the Catholic clergy and laity.¹² These views were in line with communist tactics at the time, and Straka became one of the few Catholic priests to associate himself publicly with the communists and their policies.

Straka served the communists in a number of ways. In Slovakia's postwar government, he became the head of the religious affairs department in communist Laco Novomeský's Commission of Education,¹³ where he championed, in opposition to the Church leadership, the state takeover of Catholic educational institutions, including dormitories.¹⁴ He also oversaw the purge at the Society of Saint Vojtech (the major Catholic cultural organization), took part in negotiations over state salaries for clergy, and participated in the Czechoslovak government's talks with the Vatican.¹⁵ He played an active part in the opening stages of land reform, staunchly advocating the confiscation of Church lands, and in the ethnic minority question, informing Slovakia's bishops that they were not to tolerate non-Slovaks in ecclesial positions or inner-church correspondence in any language but Slovak.¹⁶ Straka also served as a conduit for communist intelligence about Slovakia's Catholic community, especially Church leaders, educators, journalists, and activists.¹⁷

One of Straka's most prominent means of service to the communists was his commentary on religious affairs in the communist press. His articles and columns were aimed chiefly at wooing Catholic voters into the KSS. In articles for leading communist periodicals during this period, Straka credited the party with preventing the separation of church and state, raising the salaries of clergy, and defending religious freedom.¹⁸ He argued that it was only thanks to the communists that Slovak Catholicism was not equated with the "Tiso-Tuka fascist regime,"¹⁹ and that revenge had been taken against the Church and her clergy. Moreover, Straka claimed that the KSS from the start had always supported full freedom of religious life and "the fulfillment of the mission of the Roman Catholic Church." For these reasons, an anti-communist front could not be founded on religious reasons; it needed a secular foundation.

In an early version of "liberation theology," Straka argued that the teachings of Jesus Christ were in accordance with socialist principles. According to Straka, policies promoted by the communists, such as a special tax on millionaires and a more thoroughgoing land reform, stood in harmony with the Church's tradition and with papal teaching.²⁰ Jesus Christ, Christianity, and the communists all agreed that the rich should bear the heavy brunt of the tax burden. Straka rattled off a litany of scriptural accounts of Jesus' far from consoling view of the rich—the several times that he spoke unambiguously against the unjust

use of property and wealth; his statement, "Woe to you who are rich" from his Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:24); his call to the rich young man to sell all he owned and give it to the poor; his claim that it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into heaven; his parable juxtaposing the rich man, burning in hell, and the poor Lazarus. According to Straka, Jesus Christ would certainly support a tax on millionaires, on the principle that property should serve the general good of society and not some privileged rich men and profiteers. For the same reason, Christianity was for a land reform that would parcel out large estates to the needy. In making his case that Christianity supported property redistribution, Straka quoted Pope Pius XII, who in a recent speech to members of the organization Catholic Action, said that "the Church is against estates being accumulated in the hands of several rich men while wide layers of people are drowning in poverty. A more just distribution of wealth is a social task whose fulfillment it is necessary to strive for." Straka argued that the present distribution of property in Slovakia was unjust and in need of urgent reform, even if this impinged on the Church itself. "Our goal must be that the greatest number of people have the opportunity for a share in property," he concluded.²¹ Social justice and Christian love demanded it. Capitalism, based on radical materialism, was not something that Christians could defend. Like communism, Christianity was devoted to the solution of material and social problems, standing on the side of the oppressed and exploited. Christian social teaching was founded on the equality of all people and their natural right to happiness and well-being, and it taught that wealth and property had a social function. Straka cited Jesus' statement: "The worker deserves his wages" (Luke 10:7). According to Straka's articles, based on his reading of Scripture and Church teaching, Catholics had no reason to fear and good reason to cooperate with the communists.

The Catholic bishops could hardly be expected to take up the communist cause as Straka and some other leftist priests advocated. Communism was expressly atheistic; aggressively promoted policies such as the nationalization of education and the closure of Catholic youth organizations; and had a long track record of repression, often violent, against Christians. The case of Straka, therefore, was problematic for the Catholic bishops. Here was a priest who had joined the Communist Party, who championed that party zealously in the

press, and who defended and even helped to implement educational and cultural policies to which the bishops were adamantly opposed. Yet Catholic authorities were reluctant to discipline or silence him. Though they had considered excommunicating him in May 1945 for taking part in the regime's detention of a Catholic bishop accused of political unreliability, ecclesial proceedings against Straka were halted out of fears that they could endanger the Church.²² Nevertheless, when Straka publicly claimed in spring 1946 that his membership in the KSS was approved by Church authorities, his bishop, Andrej Škrábik of Banská Bystrica, issued a statement refuting that claim.²³ Thus, while the Catholic Church felt free to dissociate itself from Straka, it was not confident enough, given the postwar situation, to run the risk of confronting the communists head-on over his activities.

Cooperation with the DS or Establishment of a Separate Catholic Party

Catholics who wanted to be politically engaged without joining the communists had two options, both viable and seriously pursued: they could join the democrats or try to establish an independent Catholic party. Some, like the priest Anton Cvinček, who was heavily involved in these matters, worked on both simultaneously. A veteran of the war-time resistance, Cvinček was active in the Democratic Party after the war, and was named a delegate to Czechoslovakia's Provisional National Assembly in August 1945, a body in which he served as deputy chairman. Like other prominent Catholics in the Lutheran-dominated Democratic Party, Cvinček was disgruntled with the lack of Catholic representation. Catholics held fewer seats in the DS contingent in parliament than Cvinček felt they deserved, and relations between Catholic and Protestant parliamentarians of the DS were not good.²⁴ In October 1945, Cvinček met with fifteen other Catholic parliamentary representatives to discuss secession from the Democratic Party in order to form a separate Catholic party. Fourteen of them voted to create a new Christian Republican Party (KRS).²⁵ Cvinček abstained, not giving up hope that the position of Catholics within the DS would improve.²⁶

During the early months of 1946, Cvinček pursued a two-track policy. On the one hand, he worked with other Catholics to get official

approval for their new party. At the same time, he lobbied leaders of the DS in hopes that the party would do more to accommodate the desires of Catholics, thus rendering the creation of a Catholic party moot. The two official parties in Slovakia, the communists and democrats, together formed the National Front and had power to certify the prospective KRS; they held different positions regarding the potential new party. The communists welcomed a separate Catholic party, seeing it as an effective way to keep Catholic voters from supporting the DS. At the same time, the communists wanted to make sure that such a party was limited in the extent to which it could advance and defend Catholic interests. The democrats, for their part, were hostile to the idea, seeing it as a communist-backed effort to split the DS and foil democratic attempts to court Catholic voters. They simultaneously worked to thwart the new party and form a deal with Catholics that would win them over to the DS. Cvinček tried to help the embryonic KRS to navigate these troubled political waters, working as one of the party's chief organizers while at the same time promoting negotiations with the DS. The Slovak National Front postponed its approval of the new party until early April. Catholic organizers perceived this as a delaying tactic aimed at depriving their party of sufficient time to prepare for the spring parliamentary elections. Consequently, Cvinček engineered negotiations with the DS, which rapidly led to the conclusion of the so-called April Agreement between Slovakia's leading Catholics and the DS.²⁷ By cutting a deal with the Catholics, the DS won over the largest bloc of voters in Slovakia and thereby guaranteed itself a big victory in the elections of May 1946. Catholics were promised representation at a 7:3 ratio with Protestants in all party organs as well as economic and financial enterprises connected with the party, representation on ballots for Parliament and the SNR at a 2:1 ratio, and support for the Catholic Church's views on education, albeit within the constraints of the political situation.²⁸ Cvinček became a deputy chairman of the party and henceforth the party's chief liaison with its Catholic constituency.²⁹ To Cvinček fell the task of selling the April Agreement to the Slovak Catholic population, which he attempted to do, among other places, in a leaflet entitled "In the Spirit of Democratic Unity."³⁰ Here he referred to the fact that those Catholics hoping to found an independent Catholic party had become disillusioned by the actuality of having to compromise or abandon key principles in order to win official approval for

such a party. Though recognizing that the DS had made mistakes in the past that alienated Catholics, Cvinček argued that such concerns must retreat before the vital need for “democratic unity.”

Slovakia’s bishops, working collectively through the Bishops’ Council,³¹ were initially sympathetic to the idea of a separate party, but the events connected with the origin of the April Agreement convinced them that alliance with the DS was the best policy in the given situation.³² From the perspective of the bishops and of Catholics in general, there were a number of problems with the KRS. First, as mentioned above, approval for the party was so long in coming that little time was left for preparing an electoral campaign. Second, as a condition of its approval, the party was required to explicitly support the government’s program, which included the state monopoly of education and the condemnation of Tiso, positions many Catholics wished to avoid. The party was also obligated to drop the words “Christian” and “Republican” from its name, the former because the Slovak National Front regarded it as divisive, the latter because it was reminiscent of the now-banned Agrarian Party, also known by the appellation “Republican” in the interwar period. Third, alliance with DS would unify the non-communist forces in Slovakia, bringing Catholics and Lutherans together in common opposition to the communists. The fact that the KSS had been encouraging Catholics to found their own party since at least the autumn of 1945 made many Catholics suspect that creating an independent party would only be playing into the communists’ hands. Fourth, the DS was already a legal and established party, with far more resources at its command than a tiny new party could muster. Moreover, its leaders had the prestige that came from participation in the Slovak National Uprising, a big plus in the postwar environment. Furthermore, the DS was offering Catholics a significant role in its operations.

While Cvinček and most of the other leading Catholic activists opted for the April Agreement, a remnant stuck to the idea of a Catholic party, rechristened the Party of Freedom.³³ The bishops not only refused to endorse the new party but also made it clear that they were not endorsing it. Five days before the elections, the bishops issued a proclamation to the Catholic public:

Although, as is known, Slovak Catholics were not permitted the sort of party they demanded, we are obligated by our conscience

to cast our vote for a party that stands on a Christian basis and whose candidates will provide a guarantee that they will defend the freedom and rights of the Church, especially her right to schools and to the training of youth (i.e. dormitories), freedom of the Catholic press, and Catholic clubs.³⁴

The proclamation went on to deny allegations that Slovak bishops had joined the Party of Freedom. The Catholic press took up several of the proclamation's major themes: the enormous importance of the elections for the future of Slovakia and the Church; the elections as a clash of two opposing world views; the moral obligation of Catholics to vote for a party and not squander their votes on blank ballots; and that Catholics ought to vote for the party that would best serve Catholic interests.³⁵ Although the bishops did not appeal specifically for any party, clearly they did not intend for Catholics to support the KSS, nor the tiny Party of Freedom.

After an election campaign in which the DS, including its Catholic activists, played up the notion that the elections represented a clash between Christian and materialist world views³⁶ and that Slovakia's Christian forces needed to remain united against communist attempts to keep them separated, the Democratic Party won a landslide victory in the May 1946 election. That party garnered 62 percent of Slovakia's vote, compared with 30 percent for the communists and only 3.7 percent for the clearly marginalized Party of Freedom. However, simultaneous with winning an impressive electoral victory, the DS became a target of intense communist efforts to discredit, divide, and destroy it. The very Catholics whom communists encouraged to found their own party in the months before the April Agreement were now accused by the communists and the communist-influenced police forces as having been sympathizers with fascism, and the DS had to deal with steadily intensifying charges that it was a haven for subversives seeking to undermine Czechoslovakia's people's democracy on behalf of the former Tiso regime.³⁷ Nevertheless, the KSS continued to court Catholics, fostering the not-unfounded view that the Democratic Party would be unable to fulfill completely the promises made to Catholics in the April Agreement. At the same time, the communists also attacked the DS for promoting Catholics, not on account of their competence, but rather because of quotas established by the April Agreement.³⁸

The Non-Partisan Approach of Tomislav Kolakovič

One other political option for Catholics should be considered, if only because it represented a genuinely Catholic approach to the new situation in East Central Europe, one that accepted the people's democratic regime while eschewing political partisanship. This was the position taken by Tomislav Kolakovič-Poglajen,³⁹ reminiscent of the "fourth path" addressed in a different context by Martin Putna. In 1943, Kolakovič, a thirty-seven-year-old Catholic priest, left his homeland of Croatia because of his anti-fascist and pro-Russian views, finding refuge in Slovakia. A gifted spiritual director, he soon developed a following among clergy, intellectuals, and especially university students, setting up small circles of followers who came to be known collectively as "the Family" (*Rodina*). A participant in the Slovak National Uprising, Kolakovič hid in the forest with the Partisans. After the war, he visited the Soviet Union with the intention of convincing Stalin to allow him to evangelize Russia. Not permitted access to Stalin, he met with some Soviet officials and claims to have even baptized several Soviet security officers whom he encountered during his travels.⁴⁰ Returning to Czechoslovakia in 1945, Kolakovič continued his pastoral work, especially in the Czech lands. Though his main efforts were directed at the personal spiritual renewal of students and intellectuals, he had a view of domestic and international politics that differed significantly from Straka's leftism and Cvinček's adherence to the DS.

Kolakovič combined Russophilism with a strong desire for social justice. Internationally, he favored a rapprochement between the Vatican and the Soviet Union, advocated a Czechoslovak foreign policy that was equally aloof from East and West, and harbored hopes that Russia could be "re-Christianized," thanks to what he perceived, incorrectly, as a greater openness on the part of the Soviets after World War II. Kolakovič combined Pan-Slavism, admiration for the Eastern Orthodox Church, and social justice to form a world view that placed great hopes in Russia, while not ignoring its past brutality and shortcomings. In line with papal social teaching and the teachings of Catholic philosophers such as Jacques Maritain, he saw the need for Catholics to engage more zealously in social justice issues, both because of

the demands of the Gospel and as a way to block communist inroads among the lower classes. At the same time, he was open to cooperation with communists on social questions. In terms of Slovakia's domestic politics, Kolakovič and his followers kept aloof from both political parties, but were more wary of the DS than of the KSS. They regarded the DS as a party of Protestant sectarians, following anti-Catholic policies, especially in the realm of education. They also saw it as characterized by "bourgeois capitalism," which ran counter to Catholic social reformist goals, and as politically reliant on the United States, which would only serve to antagonize the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia's communists. Kolakovič judged that, while Catholic cooperation with the DS could scare the Soviet Union and have dire consequences for the Church should Czechoslovakia fall into the Soviet sphere, cooperation with the KSS would help the Church find a *modus vivendi* should Slovakia become communist-dominated.⁴¹

Kolakovič's vision thus consisted of a paradoxical mix of pessimistic pragmatism (i.e., the need for Catholics to prepare for a future in a communist-dominated bloc) and fantastical hopes (i.e., of re-Christianizing Russia). Its appeal was to Catholics who were leery of the West and capitalism, who wanted to match the communists more energetically in work for social reform, and whose Russophilia outweighed any reservations about the Soviet Union and its sinister past. Unlike Straka, however, Kolakovič never equated Catholic interests with those of the KSS.

While Slovakia's bishops were willing to invite Kolakovič to present his views on pastoral activity at their episcopal conference in August 1944, they kept his political vision at arm's length both during and after the war.⁴² As a foreigner who had lived in Slovakia for only a few years, he had limited connection with the nation's political elites; and, as someone who ministered mainly to academic youth, his influence and appeal was limited, at least in the short term. Unlike the Democrats, he had no party of his own; hence he could not provide a vehicle for dealing with the issues of greatest concern to the bishops. It is likely that the bishops regarded his political positions as too sympathetic to the left; though he was no Straka, he clearly represented an independent Catholic position and not that of an appendage of the KSS.

In conclusion, the Slovak case merits several observations. First, although the bishops' endorsement was crucial in getting Slovak Catholics to fall in line behind the April Agreement, neither this particular approach nor any other was driven primarily by the hierarchy. The bishops did set certain guidelines for Catholics early on—they openly accepted the regime, they tolerated Straka (albeit within limits), and they condemned neither cooperation with the democrats, nor efforts to establish a Catholic party, nor the work of Kolakovič. It was Catholic activists and intellectuals who laid the groundwork for an independent Catholic party as well as for the April Agreement. The bishops were kept informed, consulted, and ultimately asked to support the April Agreement, but they did not produce it.

Second, the bishops, and Slovakia's Catholics overall, were encumbered politically by their past association with the Tiso regime and its separatist Slovak nationalism.⁴³ When the DS took on the support of Catholics with the April Agreement, it also took on this baggage. This in turn hampered its relations with the Czech non-communist parties and made it an easier target for exaggerated or fabricated communist charges that it was consorting with sympathizers of the Tiso regime.

Third, in lining up behind the alliance with the DS, the Catholic bishops rejected both opposition to the new regime and resignation to a communist-dominated future. The pro-Tiso underground stood in the tradition of the past—that close association of Slovak nationalism and Catholicism represented by the HSLS. The options pursued by Straka and Kolakovič looked forward, albeit in fundamentally different ways, to a future where the communists would have decisive influence in Eastern Europe. Alliance with the DS was very much a choice for the present. It represented moving beyond the Tiso period by joining with a party that had emerged in opposition to his regime and had helped usher in the new Czechoslovakia. Also, by entailing close cooperation with Lutherans, it was by far the most ecumenical option available. An independent party for Catholics alone, while certainly enticing for the bishops and many Slovak Catholics, simply could not be established on terms that would make it as attractive as the DS as a potential defender and advocate of the Church's vital interests.

By the time the communists seized control of Czechoslovakia in February 1948, the Slovak underground had been decimated by police actions, Kolakovič was in exile in Belgium, the April Agreement had

been abrogated, and the DS and Party of Freedom faced impending takeover by pro-communist factions. The Church once again had to adapt itself to a new regime, now a one-party dictatorship, and confront a new if related set of choices as the ongoing saga of Catholic adjustment to regime change continued.

NOTES

- 1 The party was named for its founder, the Roman Catholic priest and Slovak nationalist Father Andrej Hlinka (1864–1938).
- 2 For a discussion of discontent among Slovak Catholics in post-1918 Czechoslovakia, see James Ramon Felak, *"At the Price of the Republic": Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, 1929–1938* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994), 20–23.
- 3 According to the 1930 census, Slovakia was 71.61 percent Roman Catholic and 6.42 percent Greek (or Eastern Rite) Catholic, for a total of 78.03 percent Catholic. According to the 1950 census, the numbers were 76.2 percent Roman Catholic and 6.55 percent Greek Catholic, for a total of 82.75 percent Catholic; see Jan Pešek and Michal Barnovský, *Štátna moc a cirkvi na Slovensku 1948–1953* (Bratislava: Slovenská akadémia vied, 1997), 13, 16–17. (For Protestants, the percentages for Lutherans were 12.02 percent in 1930 and 12.88 percent in 1950, while for Calvinists they were 4.38 percent and 3.25 percent respectively. Thus, in 1950, 98.88 percent of Slovaks identified themselves as Catholic or Protestant Christians. Of course, this data includes not only practicing believers but those who belong to a particular confession only nominally. Nevertheless, the blatant irreligion that troubled the Czech Catholic writers discussed in Martin Putna's essay was virtually nonexistent in Slovakia.) The propensity of Slovaks to identify with a Christian religious confession was also evident well into the communist period. A study of Slovak world views conducted in autumn 1968 found that 71 percent of Slovaks identified themselves as believers, and that 42 percent of Communist Party members in Slovakia identified themselves as Christians, surpassing by 5 percent the proportion of those party members identifying as atheists. See Kieran Williams, "The Prague Spring: From Elite Liberalisation to Mass Movement," in Kevin McDermott and Matthew Stibbe, eds., *Revolution and Resistance in Eastern Europe: Challenges to Communist Rule* (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 109.
- 4 The Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party and the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party were historically and ideologically hostile to Slovak nationalism and Catholicism; the Czechoslovak Communist Party and Slovak Communist Party, though the latter flirted with Slovak nationalism,

- were enemies of Catholicism; and the Czechoslovak People's Party, a Czech Catholic Party, had little sympathy for Slovak nationalism.
- 5 See Michal Barnovský, *Na ceste k monopolu moci* (Bratislava: Archa, 1993), 185–186; and Ivan Petránský, *Štát a katolícka cirkev* (Nitra: Garmond, 2001), 237–239, for more on the Slovak underground.
 - 6 See *Čas*, April 1, 1947, no. 76.
 - 7 On Tiso's name day campaign, see Slovenský národný archív (hereafter referred to as SNA), Fond Demokratická strana (hereafter referred to as DS), Carton 3, Bundle 161, Folios 39–80.
 - 8 For example, the initiator of the events in Piešťany was a Catholic priest from the nearby village of Krakovany. For accounts of the demonstration in Piešťany, see *Čas*, March 27, 1947, no. 72; *Pravda*, March 24, 1947, no. 70a; *Pravda*, March 28, 1947, no. 74; Róbert Letz, *Slovensko v rokoch 1945–1948 na ceste ku komunistickej totalite* (Bratislava: Ústredie slovenskej kresťanskej inteligencie, 1993), 145–146; Karel Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy, Komentované dokumenty (1946–1947)* (Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny ČSAV, 1992), Document 19, 199–203; and SNA, DS, Carton 3, Bundle 161, Folios 39–80 (KSS situation report on Slovakia from spring 1947).
 - 9 SNA, Fond Ústredný výbor Komunistickej strany Slovenska (hereafter referred to as ÚV KSS), Carton 2159, Folder GT-255, Bundle 2, Folio 2. The issue of blank ballots was a controversial one in spring 1946, with the communists supporting the view that it be an available option, while the DS opposed it as an option that would favor the communists; if a sizeable proportion of Slovaks voted with blank ballots, not only would it be the DS that was most likely deprived of votes, but it would also give the communists reason to charge Slovakia with being a hotbed of resistance and hence justify tougher measures there by the communist-dominated police. Because so few Slovaks ended up voting with blank ballots (12,724 of a possible 1,612,216 votes cast), the question became moot.
 - 10 Though only a small proportion of priests in Slovakia actively supported the Communist Party during this period, Straka was not alone in this respect. Jozef Lukačovič was a prominent priest in the DS with leftist sympathies, and Straka worked with like-minded clergy in the "Slavic Catholic Committee" set up by the communists in summer 1945; see SNA, ÚV KSS, Carton 2157, Folder GT 245, Bundle 8, Folio 1.
 - 11 *Slovanský katolícky výbor*.
 - 12 SNA, ÚV KSS, Carton 2157, Folder GT 245, Bundle 8, Folio 1.
 - 13 Administrative functions in Slovakia were handled by a Board of Commissioners, consisting of a number of commissions resembling governmental ministries.
 - 14 One dimension of communist policy toward education that both adds depth to our understanding of secularization and makes Straka's position more understandable was that the KSS, while insisting on the complete elimination of parochial schools, also insisted that Catholic and Protestant

- catechism classes be an integral part of the public school curriculum in Slovakia. See James Ramon Felak, "Conflicts over the State Monopoly of Education in Slovakia, 1945–1948: Catholics, Communists and Democrats," *Contemporary European History* 17, no. 4 (2008), 516–517.
- 15 For more details about these issues and Straka's involvement, see Petranský, *Štát a katolícka cirkev*, 165, 212–213, and 271–273, respectively.
- 16 See Petranský, *Štát a katolícka cirkev*, 205 and 250, respectively, for more on these issues and Straka's role in them.
- 17 For an example of Straka reporting to the communists on persons within the Catholic community, see his report of late spring or early summer 1947 in SNA, ÚV KSS, Carton 2158, Folder G-254II, Bundle 2, Folios 1–2. Although the report is unsigned, Straka was certainly its author. He was the KSS's top expert on the Catholic Church, and the document was clearly the work of someone who knew Slovakia's Catholic life from the inside, given its intimate acquaintance with those Catholics who could or could not be trusted. Even more telling, the report's author proposes a particular candidate for editor of the Catholic weekly *Katolícke noviny*, "if I myself am not accepted." Straka had long had ambitions of running *Katolícke noviny*, and the KSS wanted him on its board as their man.
- 18 Among the many examples of Straka's articles, see *Pravda*, May 23, 1946, no. 116; and *Nové slovo*, November 16, 1946, no. 44, 8–9.
- 19 Vojtech Tuka was prime minister during most of the Slovak state's existence and an avid ally of the Nazis.
- 20 *Pravda*, September 14, 1947, no. 211.
- 21 Straka's views here are akin to the concept of distributism popularized in Catholic circles by the British writers G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. See Chesterton, *The Outline of Sanity*; or Belloc, *The Servile State*, for an elaboration of this concept.
- 22 Petranský, *Štát a katolícka cirkev*, 222n.
- 23 *Katolícke noviny*, June 2, 1946, no. 22.
- 24 Michal Barnovský, 76; Letz, *Slovensko*, 32.
- 25 *Kresťansko-republikánska strana*.
- 26 Jozef Staško, "Katolíci a Aprilová dohoda," *Most* 23, no. 1–2 (1976), 49–50.
- 27 For an account of the events leading up to the April Agreement, see Staško, "Katolíci," 132–133; and Štátny oblastný archiv, Bratislava, Fond Národný súd, Hp 4/48a, testimony of Miloš Bugár, Folios 280–286.
- 28 For the text of the April Agreement, see Staško, "Katolíci," 141–143, while Hanebrink's contribution to this volume notes the failure of interwar Hungary's Catholics and Protestants to develop an "ecumenical nationalism," postwar Slovakia's Catholics and Protestants succeeded in establishing an "ecumenical anti-communism" through the April Agreement.
- 29 Cvinček also held the position of deputy chairman of the Slovak National Council and was a minister of parliament for the DS.
- 30 SNA, DS, K. 99, Folder 403-99-10.
- 31 *Biskupský zbor*.

- 32 Staško, "Katolíci," 128, 133–134. According to Staško, among the Catholic activists involved in these events, only Ján Vojtaššák, who was the bishop least reconciled to the new situation in Slovakia, favored a separate Catholic party over a deal with the DS. However, the Party of Freedom was clearly not what he had in mind by such a party.
- 33 *Strana slobody*.
- 34 *Katolícke noviny*, May 26, 1946, no. 21.
- 35 See *Katolícke noviny*, May 12, 1946, no. 19; *Katolícke noviny*, May 19, 1946, no. 20; and *Katolícke noviny*, May 26, 1946, no. 21.
- 36 See *Čas*, May 19, 1946, no. 113; *Čas*, May 9, 1946, no. 105; *Čas*, May 23, 1946, no. 116; and SNA, DS, Carton 2, Bundle 84, Folios 10–11.
- 37 For example, Jozef Kempný, one of the leading Catholics in the DS, pointed out how, in the months before the April Agreement, he and his Catholic cohorts were being courted by the communists, who regarded them as good patriots and lamented that they were being marginalized in the DS; see SNA, DS, K. 99, Folder 403-99-10.
- 38 *Nové slovo*, June 28, 1945, no. 24, 3–4; *Nové slovo*, August 2, 1946, no. 29, 7; *Nové slovo*, September 21, 1946, no. 36, 9–10; *Pravda*, October 17, 1946, no. 235.
- 39 For discussions of Kolakovič, see František Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť "rozvrátiť"* (Bratislava: Archa, 1991), 15–36; Petranský, *Štát a katolícka cirkev* (Nitra, 2001), 240–247; Anton Hlinka, *Sila slabých a slabosť silných* (Bratislava: Tatran, 1990), 57; Letz, *Slovensko*, 100–102, and Barnovský, *Na ceste*, 69–72.
- 40 Kolakovič published his memoirs, in conversation with the American writer Gretta Palmer, as *Through God's Underground: The Adventures of "Father George" among People under Soviet Rule as Told to Gretta Palmer* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1953); see 140–141 for his account of the baptism of the Soviet security officers. It should be noted that Kolakovič's account of his exploits should be taken with a grain of salt, as his memoirs are highly unreliable.
- 41 For Kolakovič's views, see the text of a lecture written by him or one of his followers in SNA, DS, Carton 1, Bundle 58; see also Barnovský, *Na ceste*, 69–71.
- 42 Petransky, *Štát a katolícky cirkev*, 242.
- 43 The Catholic Church in Slovakia lacked the boldness that we see in the Church in Hungary in Hanebrink's contribution to this collection. For one thing, non-believers in Hungary could be presented after World War I as agents of a traitorous "stab in the back." Any insinuation in post-World War II Slovakia that communists had betrayed the Tiso regime could lead to police action. Rather, in Slovakia, non-believers like the communists were officially regarded as a key component of the forces that liberated Slovakia from the Nazis, and only in the pro-Tiso underground were they attacked as traitors to wartime Slovakia.

Bulwark or Patchwork?

Religious Exceptionalism and Regional Diversity in Postwar Poland

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Pick up any text dealing with the history of modern Poland, and you are likely to find a passage relating how the country became, in the aftermath of World War II, a “nearly homogeneous Polish and Roman Catholic nation-state.”¹ In one sense, statements like this are both incontestable and important. Groups that had been a vital part of Polish history were now irrevocably absent. This was the result of the killing of the vast majority of Polish Jews during the Nazi occupation; the loss to the Soviet Union of Poland’s old eastern borderlands, with their largely Orthodox or Uniate populations; and the postwar expulsion of almost all German-speaking Protestants. But if references to ethno-religious “homogenization” can usefully call our attention to these losses, the suggestion that postwar Poland quickly became a cultural monolith obscures at least as much as it illuminates. Anyone believing that massive wartime and postwar migration produced a systematic “unmixing” of peoples, the placement of like with like, would surely be flummoxed by descriptions of everyday life in much of Poland in the late 1940s, descriptions redolent with tales of inter-communal strife and clashes of civilizations. In Warmia and Mazuria (formerly East Prussia), longtime residents were quite sure that they faced an influx of “Russians,” not fellow Poles, and these newcomers were, in turn, convinced that the local population consisted of “Germans.”² One parish priest in central Silesia referred to his congregation as “a pastiche of people of different habits, customs, and traditions, torn from different communities.”³ The apostolic administrator of Opole Silesia simply described his jurisdiction as a cultural “mosaic.”⁴ As late as the 1960s, Catholic priests in this latter region routinely broke their parishioners down into the categories of “autochthon” (of Silesian origin), “trans-

plant" (from central Poland), and "repatriate" (from Poland's lost eastern territories)—terms that sounded suspiciously like labels for ethnic groups.⁵

Even those scholars who have called attention to the anxieties generated by the mixing of people from different regions have tended to portray this as a rather short-lived state of affairs. Vincent Chrypinski, for example, duly noted that the intermingling of various "sub-cultures" created "tensions and confrontations" and that this "explosive situation" might have ended in "catastrophe." But any such dark trajectory was swiftly headed off, he insisted, by the integrative force of the Polish state and, especially, the Roman Catholic Church. In this reading of events, the experience of a shared religion soon spurred "the discovery of common virtues" and the development of "an organic community."⁶ Ethnic homogeneity, in short, may not have been evident to everyone at the outset, but the underlying Polishness of the population triumphed soon enough.

But was the path from mosaic to monolith so straightforward? Accounts that emphasize the integrating role of the Catholic Church highlight important parts of the story. The Church was, to be sure, concerned about inter- and intra-communal tensions and interested in conciliation. But Catholicism was not just a vehicle for a shared Polish-national culture that overpowered or transcended petty local differences. Catholicism was also a *source* of local difference, fostering customs and affirming experiences that were seen as unique to particular regions or, even more provocatively, as manifestations of a civilizational divide that cut across Poland. Religion served as a divisive as well as a unifying force in Poland because here, as in other largely Catholic countries, styles of religious practice and levels of regular religious observance varied enormously from region to region. Neither the parish clergy nor even the national hierarchy floated serenely above these diverse regional Catholicisms; they were themselves, to a great extent, products of these milieus. Their views of what constituted true Catholicism and who counted as good Catholics were not formed purely by convergent national criteria but also by various sub-national norms and by evolving transnational comparisons. Forging a Polish Catholicism that so many diverse constituencies would find authentic and inspiring was hardly just a matter of activating a pre-existing shared tradition. As we shall see, it often involved daunting trade-offs and implausible bal-

ancing acts, in which championing any one part of "Catholic Poland" seemed certain to alienate others.

Piety by the Numbers: Poland's Awkward Religious Geography

In the decades following World War II, as sociologists of religion amassed ever more quantitative data on patterns of piety in Western and Central Europe, scholars were repeatedly struck by the scale and the persistence of regional variation within individual states. This variation appeared to have little or no correlation with patterns of urbanization or industrialization (the presumed motors of secularization). In confessionally mixed states like Germany and the Netherlands, the primary divide was between Protestant and Catholic areas, with the latter developing a "milieu Catholicism" marked by disciplined and intensive devotional practices among the population, dense organizational networks, and representation by successful political parties.⁷ In the countries to the south and west, the dramatic gap in piety was between regions that were all overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, at least nominally. In some areas (Brittany, the Basque country, the Veneto), inhabitants continued to attend church, confess, and take communion with great regularity through the middle of the twentieth century, while in other, nearby regions (the Limousin, Romagna and Ferrara, Andalusia), the population had become thoroughly estranged from the institutional church by the early nineteenth century—or perhaps never developed regular habits of religious observance to begin with. For France, this extraordinary geographic variation was encapsulated in the *carte Bou-lard*, a map of devotional practice (named after the cleric who created it) that historian François Furet described as "one of the most crucial and most mysterious documents on France and her history."⁸ In a study of religious practice in Italy, the author similarly insisted that regional differences were so profound that "any research which does not consider them of major importance cannot be reliable."⁹ A survey devoted to Spain also stressed that "the findings of any one local or regional study cannot be generalized to the whole of Spain."¹⁰

Indeed, almost every country in Western and Central Europe has been seen as fitting this basic model of a religiously divided society—

every country, that is, except for Poland (along with the other nation with high, and presumably uniform, indices of religious participation: Ireland). While other countries witnessed protracted and often bitter culture wars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, pitting pro-clerical Catholics against secular forces in a struggle for the soul of the nation, Poland has generally been assigned to another model altogether, one in which national identity and fealty to the Catholic Church have been so symbiotically fused as to render moot talk of “culture wars” or “divided societies.”¹¹ Although these characterizations of Catholicism as a unifying, consensual, national identification are seldom framed as explicit claims about religious practice, the implication would certainly seem to be that in Poland, unlike in those divided societies, the lived experience of Catholicism was a centripetal one, tying Poles to other Poles and distinguishing them from foreigners.

But as sociologists conducted detailed studies of religious practice in Poland from the late 1940s through the 1960s, all sorts of doubts about this assumption began to emerge. The research clearly showed that in Poland, as in other Catholic countries, rates of Sunday observance varied enormously across regions. One of the earliest diocesan-level surveys revealed a church attendance rate of 82 percent in the southern diocese of Katowice in 1962. To the east, by contrast, in the diocese of Lublin, a 1971 survey recorded an attendance rate of 36 percent.¹² Some local-level studies revealed even more dramatic differences. In the Pomeranian town of Nakło nad Notecią, Sunday observance was measured at 81 percent; in the village of Wiskitki, in central Poland west of Warsaw, it was only 20 percent.¹³ Anyone familiar with Polish history, geography, and demography knew that these differences—like those across Western and Central Europe—could not be explained by classic theories of industrialization-driven secularization. If anything, the emerging data seemed to turn such theories upside down. The diocese of Katowice, by far the most industrialized part of Poland (indeed, one of the most industrialized stretches of territory in all of Europe), recorded the highest rates of observance of any early diocesan surveys, while churchgoing in many rural areas of east-central Poland was lackluster. But a different pattern *did* start to emerge from these early findings: devotional habits seemed largely to conform to the boundaries of the partition era. Galicia, the previously Austrian part of Poland, was distinguished by its very high levels of

seasonal and Sunday observance but was noticeably lax with regard to frequency of communion. Former Prussian territories that were awarded to interwar Poland—the eastern part of Upper Silesia, Poznań, the old “Polish corridor” (West Prussia)—also had high rates of Easter communion and churchgoing but were distinguished by an unusually intensive mode of piety, with far more annual communions per capita than elsewhere. Russian Poland, the country’s geographic and historic core, had (from a clerical perspective) the most troubling devotional profile. While most Catholics here adhered to minimal norms of observance like Easter Communion, both Sunday observance and communion rates were often shockingly low.

The vast western territories that Poland acquired in 1945 had a distinctive demographic and religious profile of their own. Most of these lands were repopulated wholesale after the war, with the previous, predominantly Protestant German-speaking residents fleeing westward and new settlers from central Poland and Poland’s lost eastern territories (now parts of Belarus and Ukraine) taking their place. However, in a few places (Opole Silesia, parts of Warmia and Masuria), a substantial Polish-speaking autochthonous population remained in place and now shared local parishes with “Russian” and “Austrian” Polish in-migrants. Parishioners’ disparate regional origins were not only noted by local pastors but regularly cited as the key to understanding differences in religious behavior. According to a 1967 church survey in the Opole region, autochthones were “100 percent deeply believing and religious,” while newcomers to the region were “seldom practicing.”¹⁴ A pastor in central Silesia had a more differentiated take on immigrants from the East. Those from the Wilno (Vilnius) and Tarnopol regions in Poland’s former eastern borderlands were deemed “the best” of the immigrants in terms of religiosity.¹⁵ Others agreed that settlers from the old eastern territories as well as from Galicia and nearby Poznań exhibited some “worthy” religious attitudes. Almost all clerical observers, though, described immigrants from central (Russian) Poland—Częstochowa, Kielce, Lublin, Łódź—as “religiously negligent,” “indifferent,” and “morally standing very low.” Only around 20 percent of these inhabitants, it was estimated, came to church on any given Sunday.¹⁶

Pastoral characterizations of piety as a regional rather than a national phenomenon were being echoed by academic observers as well.

In his study of a village in Opole Silesia conducted immediately after the war, Stanisław Ossowski, a sociologist of social democratic sympathies, wrote that here Catholicism “was not a factor in national ties but rather in regional ties.”¹⁷ When Father Władysław Piwowarski, a church-affiliated sociologist, asked residents in east-central Poland about what level of religious community they identified with most strongly, the national church came in a distant third, trailing both the local parish (the runaway winner) and the universal church as points of identification. “It must be stated,” Piwowarski concluded, “that the range of Catholics identifying with the Polish church is not large.”¹⁸

Perhaps even more eyebrow-raising than evidence suggesting that some Poles were significantly more devout than other Poles were findings suggesting that Poles, on average, were not necessarily more devout than West Europeans. When Father Piwowarski compared his data on religious practice in the Warmia diocese in the early 1960s with preliminary data from a couple other Polish dioceses and with published data from other Catholic countries, the resulting picture was decidedly mixed. Easter communion rates for Polish dioceses were, to be sure, quite high—albeit regionally variable: around 75 percent in Warmia; 55 percent in Gdańsk; 85 percent in Poznań. These seemed to compare favorably with averages of 34 percent in France, 46 percent in Austria, or 54 percent in West Germany—though not with the dioceses of the Netherlands, where Easter observance ranged from 73 percent to 93 percent. But Piwowarski refused to view such figures complacently. Simply receiving Easter communion, he noted, was the mark of a “holiday Catholic” or (following the terminology of Gabriel Le Bras, the French sociologist who provided many of Piwowarski’s theoretical points of reference) a “seasonal conformist.”¹⁹ When it came to measures of weekly mass attendance—a practice indicating that a parishioner was at least a “Sunday Catholic”—Polish figures turned out to be quite run-of-the-mill for Central Europe. Even given methodological differences that significantly inflated Polish figures compared to those of other countries (see footnote 19), church attendance figures gathered for several Polish dioceses—Warmia (44 percent), Gdańsk (51 percent), Gnieźno (64 percent)—were hardly distinguishable from averages in West Germany (45 percent), Belgium (50 percent), and the Netherlands (64 percent).²⁰ The one measure of piety where Polish figures *did* seem to stand out—but in an alarming rather than reassur-

ing way—was frequency of communion over the course of the year. Since this was an “optional” practice, Piwowarski (again, following Le Bras) saw it as a useful rough index of deeper “religious vitality.”²¹ In the early 1950s, the average Polish Catholics appeared to be taking communion between three times a year (Warmia) and nine times a year (Gnieźno). The average Dutch Catholic, by contrast, took the sacrament between thirty and sixty-nine times a year (depending on diocese). “It is difficult,” Piwowarski concluded, regarding the dismal figures from Warmia, “to consider the state of this practice as satisfactory.”²²

As these examples illustrate, church-affiliated sociologists like Piwowarski were certainly not suppressing potentially disquieting or embarrassing data. Nonetheless, when clerical scholars summarized findings on the state of Polish Catholicism—especially for more general and foreign audiences—references to heterogeneity and devotional laxity tended to be pushed into the background in favor of ringing affirmations of the essential vigor of the faith. In an article on urban religiosity published in the Catholic periodical *Znak* in the spring of 1966, Piwowarski rather arbitrarily summarized an array of statistics on church attendance in various Polish and West European cities as demonstrating that observance in the former was “repeatedly significantly higher” than in the latter. He did not comment on figures showing that church attendance in West European cities such as Amsterdam and Bilbao was actually higher than in Polish cities such as Częstochowa, Lublin, or Radom.²³ Father Józef Majka, a colleague of Piwowarski’s at the Catholic University of Lublin, was similarly selective in his characterization of recent research on Polish Catholicism. In an article in the sociological journal *Social Compass*, Majka conceded that there were “definite geographical differentiations” and “distinct types of religiosity” in various parts of Poland. He even briefly suggested that some of these “types” were not just different from but superior to others. Silesia and Poznań, he wrote, perhaps exhibited “the most conscious and mature religiosity,” while in the former Russian zone, official efforts to “lower the intellectual level” of the clergy “had an effect on the religiosity of the faithful.” But Majka quickly dropped this provocative line of analysis. He went on to emphasize that geographic variation was not due to any deep-seated “psychological differences” among the people but rather to the “various forms of anti-religious pressures exerted by

occupying powers.” Since internal differences were the result of foreign oppression, Majka stated confidently, it could be assumed that they were “slowly disappearing.” Scholars could now safely concentrate on amalgamating diocesan data to give “an approximate picture” of trends in “the whole of Poland.”²⁴ Like Piwowarski, he offered reassurances that church attendance in Poland was generally “very high” in comparison with Western Europe.²⁵

One might expect that more secular, Marxist-oriented Polish scholars would take issue with this portrait of a durably and homogeneously devout country. Indeed, they did—but in a very specific and ultimately quite self-limiting way. Their primary target was the claim that, in Majka’s words, “one does not observe fundamental differences in religious practices between the city and the village.”²⁶ This notion that classic theories of modernization-driven secularization did not apply in Poland was, not surprisingly, vigorously rejected by Marxist sociologists such as Edward Ciupak. He insisted that urbanization and industrialization were, in fact, taking a visible toll on religious conformity across the country, resulting in a slow but sure “disintegration” of parochial bonds.²⁷ Ciupak’s most contentious specific claim was that in Warsaw, Poland’s capital and largest city, Sunday observance in the early 1960s was just over 20 percent. Church-affiliated scholars sharply questioned Ciupak’s methodology, arguing that if he had counted attendance at all chapels, shrines, and other devotional sites, rather than just services at parish churches, the observed rate would have been at least twice as high.²⁸

This preoccupation with trends in religious practice in Poland’s most urbanized settings was understandable, and it certainly provided occasion for polemical fireworks between those sympathetic to the church and those aligned with the communist regime. But what is perhaps more striking, on closer examination, than these high-profile disputes about the future of Polish Catholicism is the degree of convergence between the two sides in their accounts of Polish Catholicism’s past and even its present. Ciupak’s secularization narrative, after all, assumed that religious practice was ubiquitous in traditional rural communities and only started to “disintegrate” under the onslaught of modernization. Evidence that religious observance in some parts of rural Poland was *already* weak was, in this respect, as awkward for him as it was for scholars sympathetic to the church. For example, when

Ciupak found postwar church attendance rates of 23 to 29 percent in a village near Warsaw, his attention was focused exclusively on signs of temporal *decline* in religious practice—presumably under the impact of growing links to the metropolis.²⁹ He seemed remarkably uninterested in another question: why were levels of religious observance so low to begin with, at a time (the late 1940s) when industrialization's impact on rural and small-town Poland was still very modest?

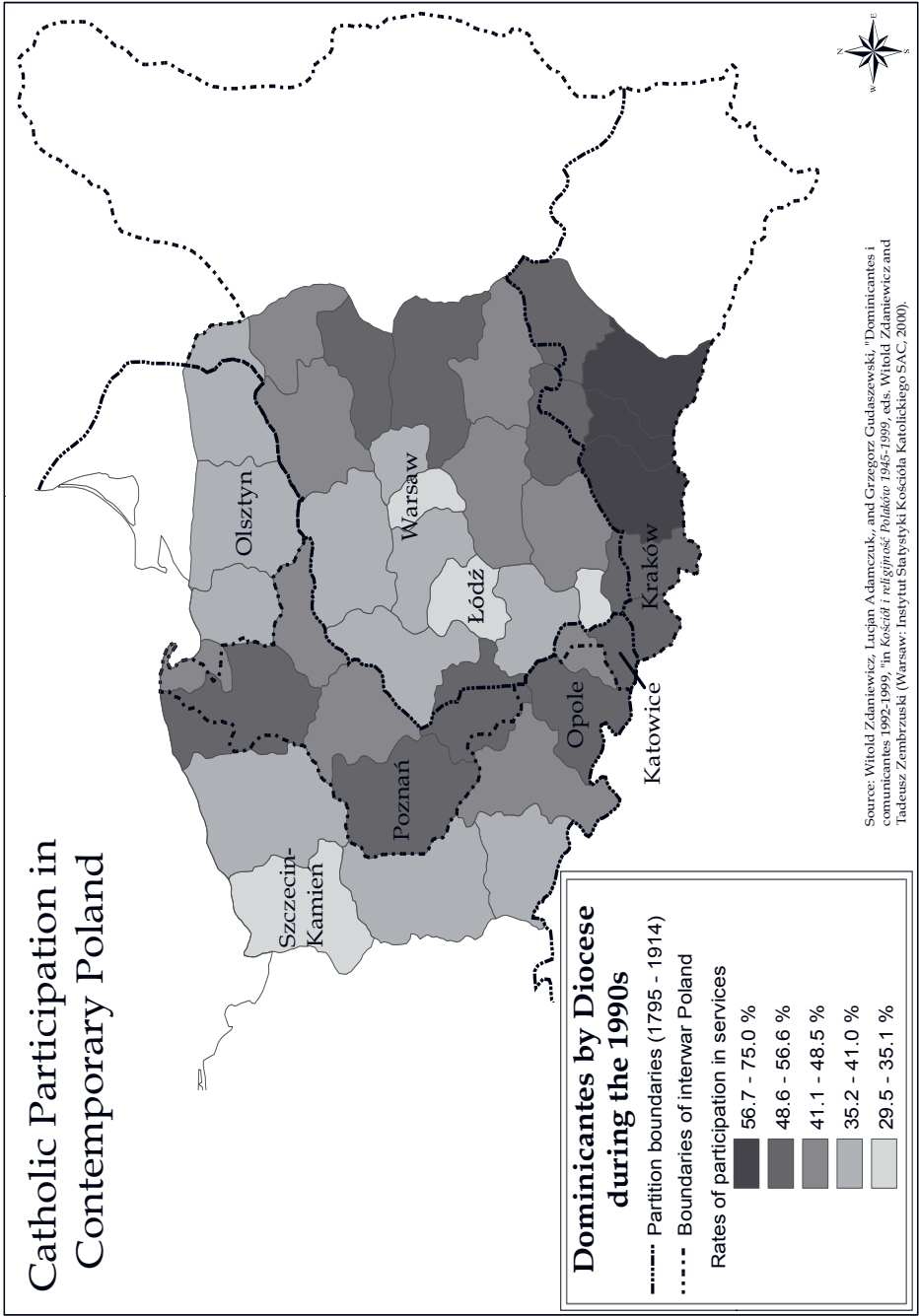
Characterizing the initial figures as “low” would, of course, have required some explicit or implicit comparison, either with other parts of Poland or with other countries. The first option was, in part, made difficult by the patchiness of data available at the time: only in the early 1980s would it become clear that the low rates evident in “Osina” were quite common in “Russian” Poland but rare in most of “Austrian” and “Prussian” Poland.³⁰ Thinking in such regionalized terms, however, also ran up against ideological barriers. It would have shifted attention away from a story of diachronic change to one of synchronic diversity, from an image of a unified Poland marching forward through time to one of a country struggling to hold its heterogeneous components together. This was no more attractive or useable an interpretive framework for secular scholars than it was for the church and its sympathizers. The second option, making explicit quantitative comparisons to Western Europe, would have been equally problematic. It would have located the benchmark for robust religiosity in Western—or, more precisely, West-Central—Europe. Although this would actually have dovetailed nicely with the regime's depiction of a Vatican-Bonn axis directing a clericalist “crusade” against Poland, it was in tension with the elegant simplicity of Marxist models of secularization. How could urbanization and industrialization be portrayed as leading to the relentless disintegration of organized religion in Poland if, in the lands of northwestern Europe that pioneered the Industrial Revolution, intensive religious practice remained the norm?

The “problem” of a vigorous West-Central European Catholicism only remained acute, of course, through the mid- to late 1960s. Over subsequent years, and especially during the decade following the Second Vatican Council, indices of religious devotion plummeted in much of Catholic Europe. In Belgium, church attendance fell from 43 percent (1967) to 30 percent (1976); in the Netherlands from 64 percent (1966) to 35 percent (1974); in West Germany from 49 percent (1961)

to 33 percent (1975). Even in a longstanding bastion of rural piety like Limerzel in Brittany, Sunday observance sunk dramatically from 92 percent (1958) to 35–40 percent (1985).³¹ Today, church attendance is below 10 percent in every region in France and below 20 percent in all but two dioceses in western Germany.³² “Catholic Poland” finally found the foil that it had lacked in the first decades after World War II: a convincing “secular West.”

But even as this changing backdrop has allowed Poland to stand out more and more as a case of exceptional piety, variation in religious practice *within* the country has remained astonishingly consistent. In 1980, when the first national survey of church attendance was conducted, the difference between the most observant and least observant dioceses was 40 percentage points. A quarter-century later, the gap is essentially unchanged at 41 points, and the correlation with partition-era geography remains obvious.³³ In the meantime, public awareness and discussion of regional divergences, in religiosity as well as other social and cultural indicators, has grown enormously. In part, this can be ascribed to more systematic collection and publication of devotional data, which has made possible the belated creation of a Polish *carte Boulard* illustrating the uncanny correlation between patterns of religious practice and partition-era geography (see Map 1).³⁴ But the return of multi-party democracy has no doubt done the most to alert Poles to the ongoing interplay between religion and region.³⁵ In the aftermath of polarizing electoral contests between post-Solidarity and postcommunist forces—perhaps most dramatically in the 1995 presidential run-off between Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Lech Wałęsa—commentators were quick to identity “two Polands”: one (Kwaśniewski’s), based in central Poland and the western territories, was characterized by relatively low religious observance; the other (Wałęsa’s) was more demonstratively pious, with strongholds in Galicia, Silesia, and Pomerania/West Prussia.

The rediscovery of regional particularism within Catholic Poland raises interesting—and tricky—questions for historians of the communist era. As with the far more dramatic revival of national identifications and tensions in the USSR and Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s, we are compelled to take seriously such forceful (re)assertion of cultural differences, but we must be careful not to read them as manifestations of “authentic” underlying identities that have simply been



Map 1.

hidden from view by a thick veil of repression. The approach of scholars like Ron Suny and Yuri Slezkine to the nationalist revivals of the late Soviet era can be helpful here. Rather than accepting standard stereotypes of Bolshevism as resolutely anti-national (or at least intolerant of national minorities), they have highlighted the ways in which the Soviet regime was actually quite “ethnophilic,” intent on promoting, consolidating, and institutionalizing national identifications.³⁶ A somewhat similar rethinking, I would argue, is in order for analyses of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. Rather than viewing the persistence of regional differences among Polish Catholics simply as an anomaly or a residue that survives the best intentions of a resolutely nationalizing institution, it is worthwhile to consider ways in which the postwar church actively promoted and celebrated local particularism. This approach, cultivating an “organic” local community as a model for a national one, can give us a richer and more nuanced understanding of how nationalization and particularism could go hand in hand.³⁷ It also allows us to investigate the strikingly successful efforts of the Catholic Church to maintain the loyalty of those whose conception of local identity led them to question—and frequently seek exit from—the very category of Polishness.

Patriotism, Martyrdom, Treason: The Polish Church and the German Question

When Cardinal August Hlond, Archbishop of Gnieźno-Poznań and Primate of Poland, returned from exile in the summer of 1945, Pope Pius XII granted him sweeping plenipotentiary powers on the territory administered by the postwar Polish state. This emergency measure was intended to allow the continued operation of the local church to continue to operate if communication with the Vatican was severed. But in subsequent months and years, the pope’s concession became the basis for an unusual degree of national autonomy for the Church in Poland. Already by the end of 1945, Hlond had appointed new apostolic administrators for Poland’s western territories, effectively granting them the power of bishops in dioceses that, in the eyes of the Vatican, remained German. Hlond’s successor, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, pushed the bounds of national autonomy even further when, in 1950,

he negotiated a wide-ranging agreement with the Polish government that included a pledge to push the Vatican to recognize the permanence of the new German-Polish frontier. Coming only two years after the pope had denounced the postwar expulsion of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia and expressed the hope that they could soon return to their old homes, Wyszyński's actions dramatically underlined the distinction between the Roman Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church *in Poland*.³⁸ Some 15 years later, the primate would bristle at charges by the communist authorities that he was taking orders from the Vatican. Rome, he assured an audience of diocesan priests in Poznań, understood that "Poland manages itself."³⁹

Establishing the Polish church's territorial integrity and the Polish episcopate's administrative authority did not, however, transform Polish Catholicism into a self-contained and homogeneous entity. For even as Hlond and Wyszyński attempted to draw an organizational bright line around the Polish Church—and, in particular, between the Polish Church and the German Church—it became clear that the Church's human constituencies could not be so neatly separated. Hundreds of parish priests and hundreds of thousands of parishioners had spent the war and, to varying degrees, the years before the war as German Catholics. What, exactly, would it mean to integrate these people and their lived experiences into the postwar Polish church? "Polonization," as a transformative process involving the acceptance of norms and practices prevailing in other regions, risked driving them out of the country and into the potentially more familiar arms of the German Church. But if the Polish Church embraced these German Catholics and their existing traditions as *already* impeccably Polish—indeed, perhaps, as a model that other Poles should emulate—then it risked alienating Catholics in other regions. Indeed, Poles might be led to wonder if there was truth in charges by state and party officials that the Church's "Western" orientation was just a codeword for Germanophilia.

Nowhere were these tensions more acute than in the diocese of Katowice. During the war, with the agreement of the London government in exile, Bishop Stanisław Adamski had encouraged residents to subscribe to the mandatory German *Volksliste*, accepting categorization as "ethnic Germans" in order to avoid possible arrest or deportation. Roughly half of the diocesan clergy and 90 percent of the total popula-

tion ended up being classified as Category I, II, or III *Volksdeutsche*.⁴⁰ Designation as “ethnic Germans” had consequences. Some 120,000 men, including 50 diocesan priests and 22 members of religious orders, were conscripted into the *Wehrmacht*, and adolescents were systematically recruited to the *Hitlerjugend* and *Bund deutscher Mädel*.⁴¹ When the Soviet army entered the region in the first weeks of 1945, soon followed by the fledgling Polish security service, they predictably treated most of the inhabitants as Germans. Civilians were killed in reprisals for attacks on Soviet soldiers, skilled workers were deported to the USSR, and thousands ended up in *ad hoc* labor camps.⁴² Such behavior became all the more ubiquitous when Soviet troops crossed Germany’s prewar frontiers, even as they again encountered largely Polish-speaking populations.

For a long time—to some extent, up through the present day—these experiences have been remembered as part of German postwar suffering.⁴³ Many of those targeted, after all, sooner or later joined the millions of other *Volksdeutschen* and residents of Germany’s eastern territories who emigrated to the Federal Republic. Those who did leave were not only rhetorically embraced as part of the *Volksgemeinschaft* but also encompassed in the specific story of German Catholic martyrdom, as both expelled priests and bishops and the West German episcopate ardently promoted their cause.⁴⁴ According to this narrative, residents of eastern Germany, inhabiting the outer ramparts of Western Christendom, had faced an Asiatic-Bolshevik (and, not infrequently, Judaeo-Bolshevik) onslaught from the East, followed by communist servitude and destitution.⁴⁵ Even for those who remained (temporarily?) in postwar Poland, the prospect of being unambiguously on the western side of the civilizational divide was appealing. Pro-regime Polish writers in the 1950s saw evidence of a revived “fashion of Silesianness” and a tendency—credited to the work of American and West German agents—to “oppose Silesianness to Polishness as something separate, independent.” Local officials in the Opole region reported seeing graffiti proclaiming (in Polish) “Poles out of Silesia” and “Long live Adenauer!”⁴⁶

To prevent a wholesale emigration of the faithful whom he had advised to accept the status of *Volksdeutsche*, Bishop Adamski intervened aggressively with Polish officials as well as appealing to the broader Polish public. Some of his protests were aimed at saving in-

dividuals slated for expulsion: for instance, his wartime vicar-general, Franz Wosnitza, and the lay leaders of the German Christian People's Party, who were defended not for being "Polish" *per se*, but for opposing Nazism and assisting Poles during the occupation.⁴⁷ For the most part, these appeals were unsuccessful. But a widely circulated pamphlet that the bishop published concerning the general fate of Silesia's *Volksdeutschen* found a wider echo. Near-universal adherence to the *Volksliste*, Adamski argued, was neither mass treason nor an expression of authentic national allegiance, but rather a clever "masquerade" that succeeded in shielding hundreds of thousands of Poles from repression. The claim that Silesians' Germanness was a "mask," while their Polishness was genuine, seemed to rest on notions of ethnic origin. Some Silesians, he conceded, did have "momentary German convictions" or were "unsteady, still nationally undecided," but very few were "true-born Germans." Adamski also shrewdly cited General Aleksander Zawadzki, the acting governor of the Katowice province, who declared that it was "necessary to save every drop of Polish blood" in Poland's western borderlands.⁴⁸ Adamski's generous definition of "Polish blood" made sense; it was a way to buttress Poland's claim that the "recovered territories" actually did have some pre-existing Polish population and to make up some of the nation's catastrophic wartime demographic losses.

Already within a year after the war's end, Polish officials shifted from treating the local population as effectively German to viewing the vast majority as redeemable Poles. Silesians who fell in Categories III and IV of the *Volksliste*—about two-thirds of the total population—were rehabilitated as a matter of administrative routine. Those in Categories I and II had to submit applications for rehabilitation to the courts, but a large majority of "twos" were also soon deemed to be Polish, bringing the total rehabilitated in the Katowice diocese to over 1 million. The priority of saving "every drop of Polish blood" also led state officials to take a rather expansive approach to the "verification" of ethnic Poles in Opole Silesia. Over 850,000 former German citizens were accepted as ethnically Polish, including 350 Roman Catholic priests who had "passed as Germans" until the end of the war but now "declared themselves as Poles" in 1945.⁴⁹ The practice of rehabilitation and verification was not quite so generous in other regions, but tens of thousands of *Reichsdeutschen* in East Prussia (Warmia and

Mazuria) and *Volksdeutschen* in the Kashubian-populated counties west and south of Gdańsk were also accepted as citizens of the new Poland.⁵⁰ Altogether, roughly one-tenth of the country's postwar population—and almost as high a proportion of its Roman Catholic clergy—was made up of “Poles” who had spent the war “masquerading as Germans.”⁵¹

Although Polish state officials presided over these processes, many continued to view the rehabilitated and the verified as, at best, probationary Poles. Catholic priests in these categories were, of course, doubly suspect—as agents of clerical reaction as well as irredentism—and in Silesia, accusations of intransigence on church-state issues were routinely paired with charges of Germanophilia. In 1948 the head of the social-political department for the province of Silesia-Dąbrowa demanded that 40 Catholic priests whose first or last names were deemed too German-sounding should be excluded from religious instruction in schools, lest they “inhibit the process of repolonization” and contribute to the “demoralization of society, especially youth.”⁵² The next year, when Bishop Adamski spoke out against the elimination of religious instruction in local schools, the official press, inverting Adamski's own language, wrote darkly of the “masks” that the bishop had assumed to cover up his collaborationist activities during the war.⁵³ As the regime went on to cultivate a group of “patriotic priests” affiliated with the Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy (*Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację*, hereafter ZBoWiD), references to the “German” pasts of more oppositional priests remained an irresistible rhetorical weapon, one that would continue to be deployed well after the end of the Stalinist era. In the mid-1960s, when a priest in Zabrze was accused of promoting pilgrimages without government authorization, local officials suggestively noted that he had served in the *Wehrmacht* for two years and that during the recent peregrination of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa, he had failed to recommend decorating the local church with the Polish national colors.⁵⁴ As late as the early 1980s, when state officials were concerned that Adamski's successor, Herbert Bednorz, might encourage the clergy to engage in a demonstrative show of support for Solidarity, they pointedly reminded him that the *Volksliste* issue could always be reopened.⁵⁵

The regime's exploitation of wartime ethnic categorizations was, of course, cynical and involved all manner of misrepresentations. But

the general characterization of the Catholic Church as solicitous toward those with *Reichsdeutsch* or *Volksdeutsch* pasts was, for the most part, entirely accurate. As noted above, the parish clergy in areas like Opole Silesia where the population was a mix of autochthones and immigrants from various parts of Poland openly lauded the former at the expense of the latter. Priests raved about “the deep faith of the Silesian people” and their “beautiful religious habits” while bemoaning the “weak religious life” and “religious indifference” of immigrants from other Polish regions.⁵⁶ Recruitment to the priesthood likewise was heavily skewed toward the locally born. Native Silesians, while making up only 56 percent of the population of Opole Silesia by 1950, accounted for 71 percent of priests ordained between 1945 and 1962.⁵⁷ Not surprisingly, the widespread perception that autochthones owned and defined local Catholicism stirred resentment among newcomers. In 1957 a woman originally from Lwów complained that local displays of Catholic piety, far from blurring differences among Poles, were a way of keeping truly “Polish” traditions at a distance. Silesians, she complained, “congratulate themselves on their religiosity and their Catholicism,” but they showed no interest in “our national church traditions.”⁵⁸ Indeed, some comments by clergymen in Silesia reinforced the perception that local piety was being defined against, rather than as a function of, Polishness. One priest referred dismissively to the faith of his (largely immigrant) parishioners as “rather Polish, without clear interest or engagement.”⁵⁹ Another, demonstrating the potential slippage from championship of regional, Silesian particularism to an openly German perspective, wrote that “all of the best ones [parishioners] went to the Reich—the only the rabble remained.”⁶⁰

Such pronouncements, viewed against the supposedly uncompromising patriotism of Polish Catholicism, are rather startling. But there were a number of reasons why not only local clergy but even higher-ranking Polish prelates looked on the peculiarities of “post-German” Catholicism with sympathy and even admiration rather than with embarrassment. First, a considerable proportion of the postwar Polish hierarchy was *from* Silesia and had firsthand, lived experience of its national ambiguities. Cardinal August Hlond, Archbishop of Gnieźno-Poznań (later Gnieźno-Warsaw) and Primate of Poland; Teodor Kubina, Bishop of Częstochowa; and Bolesław Kominek, apostolic administrator of Opole and later Archbishop of Wrocław, were all born

in what would become the diocese of Katowice.⁶¹ For these prelates, Silesian autochthones were not a borderland curiosity but rather their childhood friends, neighbors, and relatives. Second, the autochthonous population represented a *settled* population, similar, in this respect, to the smallholder peasants of Małopolska, another constituency held up by the church as a model of piety. Although scholars like Maryjane Osa have rightly noted the important role of the wartime disruption in invigorating Polish Catholicism, the clergy's normative understanding of religiosity and morality nonetheless inherently favored rootedness.⁶² For those driven out of their homes and struggling to establish regular devotional habits in unfamiliar lands, who could provide a better example than those who had managed to stay put? Third, the Silesian clergy's characterization of local habits like frequent communion as indicators of a "higher" level of religiosity could not readily be dismissed as either regional self-flattery or a German heresy. Frequent communion had been actively promoted by the Church since a papal decree of 1905, and clerical researchers in Poland accepted it as normative. Father Piwowarski, for example, wrote: "It seems that the more conscious Catholics are, the more often they connect participation in Mass with reception of communion." The fact that communion rates were so low in most of Poland was taken as a sign that religious life there was "ritualistic, superficial, mechanistic."⁶³

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it was difficult to marginalize the "German" aspects of Polish Catholicism because they were so inextricably linked to visions of Poland's socio-economic future. As discussed earlier, both secular and church-affiliated scholars in Poland (as almost anywhere else in the 1960s) were engaged in affirming or contesting a teleological, industrialization-driven understanding of secularization. The obvious test case for such theories was the part of Poland with the longest track record of industrial development. Indeed, church scholars, taking notice of the extraordinarily high devotional statistics coming out of Silesia, seized on such evidence as "g[iving] the lie to the thesis that industrialization and urbanization will invariably bring about a decline in religiosity."⁶⁴ In making this claim, Father Majka did not cite any of the major industrial regions of "Russian" Poland: Łódź, Warsaw, or the Dąbrowa basin. He conceded that these areas had actually undergone "marked progress toward ... de-Christianization" since the mid-nineteenth century. Interestingly, Majka also seemed reluc-

tant to draw many conclusions from the short track record of newly industrialized sites such as Nowa Huta, noting only that the “postwar wave of industrialization has not yet brought massive defections in its wake.” Instead, his generalizations about the impact of industrialization on Polish Catholicism were based on a single case study: a 1968 doctoral dissertation studying religiosity in the Upper Silesian city of Bytom (Beuthen) during the late nineteenth century—more than fifty years before the city first became part of Poland.⁶⁵ By the 1980s this invocation of Upper Silesia as *both* a unique case *and* metonymic evidence of the vibrancy of “Polish” Catholicism had become ubiquitous in Polish church circles. Historian Daniel Olszewski described Upper Silesia’s apparent resistance to secularization as “unparalleled on a European scale.”⁶⁶ Franciszek Macharski, the bishop of Kraków, gushed (in an admittedly less scholarly intervention): “There was one place in Europe, in the whole world, in which smokestacks arose and mineshafts were dug and yet the worker did not flee from Christ. That was Silesia.”⁶⁷ Having embraced Silesia as *the* proving ground for the Polish church’s ability to resist secularization, Polish clerics and church-affiliated laymen could hardly dismiss the region as an anomaly.

This revisionist view of postwar Polish Catholicism offers a corrective to visions of an ethno-religious monolith in which Catholicism and Polishness are imagined as effectively indistinguishable. As we have seen, many both critical and laudatory observers saw the most unimpeachably Catholic residents of Poland as the least convincingly Polish and, in turn, the most representative Poles as decidedly lackluster models of Catholic devotion. Recovering this understanding of Poland as a religious “mosaic,” I argue, allows us to revisit a variety of events in the history of the communist era and catch glimpses of tensions and nuances that we might otherwise miss. As a preliminary example, I will briefly discuss how it might shed light on the interplay between two well-known and near-simultaneous episodes that have remained—each in their own way—puzzles: the culmination of the ten-year-long “Great Novena” during the celebration of the millennium of Christianity in Poland in 1966 and the exchange of letters between the Polish and German episcopates in December 1965.

Scholars like Jan Kubik and Maryjane Osa have pointed to the Great Novena as a watershed in the confrontation between the Polish church and the Polish state, the moment when the hierarchy vis-

ibly mobilized the nation against the regime. Jan Kubik reported that “almost everyone [he] spoke to believed that the Church, due to its uncompromising stand during the celebrations, strengthened its institutional position in the society and enhanced the faith of Polish Catholics.”⁶⁸ Maryjane Osa has written in similar terms of the transformative impact of 1966, insisting that the Great Novena “generated enormous social capital” and provided “ongoing training in social movement methods and consciousness.”⁶⁹ But Kubik went on to note some troubling and “not easily explainable” findings by Władysław Piwowarski: between two-thirds and three-quarters of rural parishioners that he interviewed between 1967 and 1970 had not, in fact, heard of the Great Novena. The earlier optimistic picture, he concluded, “was shattered.”⁷⁰

Piwowarski's figures are only shocking, however, against the backdrop of a caricatured, monolithic vision of Polish village Catholicism, in which regular local practice was closely synchronized with Wyszyński's repertoire of national symbols. In the context of Piwowarski's *other* findings—e.g., that very few people associated Catholicism primarily with the nation, or that two-thirds to three-quarters of parishioners in many Polish villages did not even go to church on a given Sunday—might seem perfectly predictable, perhaps even compatible with the standard narrative of the Great Novena as a great success. For if, as the evidence suggests, Catholicism in postwar Poland was a bundle of very loosely connected local religiosities, then Wyszyński's “theology of the nation” and the carefully choreographed peregrination of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa to the dioceses of the nation should not be interpreted as a summoning of a pre-existing, well-developed mass Polish-Catholic identity, but rather a laborious attempt to *create* one. A primarily Polish-patriotic sense of Catholicism, one knit together by citations from Romantic poets and key dates in Polish history, was largely the preserve of the Polish intelligentsia. So it was understandable that Wyszyński's full ideological vision resonated most noticeably among Jan Kubik's urban, educated interlocutors.

One might say that Wyszyński himself set the bar for the success of the Great Novena impossibly high. He proclaimed as a pre-existing reality something that was actually an ideological project: a mystically unified Catholic Poland moving through history. We find a rather different—and in some ways more illuminating—description of what was

involved in building Polish Catholicism in the writings and speeches of Wyszyński's lesser-known but extremely influential colleague, Archbishop Bolesław Kominek. If Wyszyński tended to portray each Polish town and village as a microcosm of an eternal Poland, Kominek, who administered the diocese of Opole from 1945 to 1956 and then the diocese of Wrocław until his death in 1974, seemed to view the country as the "mosaic" of the western territories writ large. In describing the slow process of integration in the Opole region, he did not shy away from language that suggested a divided society recovering from civil war. Kominek wrote that at the pilgrimage site of Annaberg, "purely Silesian" Catholics encountered the more Polish-national worship style of "new Silesians," and "previous mutual injustices and score-settling slowly recede into oblivion."⁷¹ In a sermon delivered in Opole during the millennial year, he again pointed to a process of national integration that began with integration into *local* society. Proclaiming the millennium of the "Silesian people," Kominek went on to portray Silesia as a melting pot, a future-oriented society defined by modern industry rather than the past. The Virgin Mary of Piekary (a regional pilgrimage site), he emphasized, calls everyone to her Son, "without regard to descent, even without regard to our patrimony (*ojcowiznę*)."⁷²

As Kominek traveled to other parts of Poland during the millennial year to deliver a series of sermons, he approached each new city as a distinctive regional audience, requiring subtle changes in theme and tone. In Przemyśl (southeastern Poland) he noted the "more melodious" sounds of the local language, making a self-deprecating comparison to his own "harder" Silesian dialect.⁷³ In Siedlce (northeastern Poland), he was by turns flattering and playful in describing the region as "perhaps the most pious" in the country as well as "a kind of redoubt of Polish Catholicism, a kind of rising sun—I do not want to use the expression 'bulwark.'" He then moved on to a regionally appropriate discussion of ecumenical contacts with the Uniate church.⁷⁴ In Olsztyn, he made some more general comments about the idea of national unity within the church. This could not, he stressed, be an "artificial" unity, the "cursed unity of a [concentration] camp." The Catholic Church in Poland should instead be imagined as a network of distinct but interconnected churches, like those of the time of St. Paul.⁷⁵

This multi-centered, heterogeneous vision of Polish Catholicism is important to keep in mind in turning to Kominek's primary claim to

fame at this time: his authorship of a letter to the West German episcopate inviting them to participate in the millennial commemorations. The letter combined a recitation of familiar Polish claims to its new western territories with a more memorable and arrestingly straightforward expression of forgiveness for past German crimes and a request for forgiveness for historical injustices suffered by Germans. Publication of the letter provoked a firestorm; the regime meticulously orchestrated much of the criticism, but there was also genuine grassroots outrage that left lay Catholic activists flummoxed and on the defensive.⁷⁶ One of the central points of government critique was that the bishops' letter represented a presumptuous leap from domestic concerns into "foreign policy." To later observers as well, this epistolary exchange with West Germany's episcopate seemed a bafflingly self-defeating distraction from the patriotic themes of the millennial commemorations. Why would the Polish Church, the guardian of national traditions, open itself to association with the nation's arch-enemy? But to Kominek, the difficulties involved in the exchange of letters with the German episcopate—competing historical claims, divergent languages and traditions, painful wartime experiences, the need for mutual forgiveness and reconciliation—were, to varying degrees, already familiar from Poland's *intra*-national discussions. As he told an audience at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Wrocław shortly after publication of the bishops' letter, charges of "treason" were routine in Poland's western territories. These charges, he provocatively added, were often voiced by people eager to cover up "their own guilt, their own sins from the occupation," such as involvement with the Ukrainian partisans or "SS Galicia" formation (an apparent reference to fluid boundaries between "Poles" and "Ukrainians" among "repatriates" from the East). Anyone who claimed absolute innocence, he concluded, was "a Pharisee" since "there are no people without sin" (interestingly, he cited Albert Camus for this last point rather than Jesus Christ).⁷⁷

Indeed, in writing the letter to the West German bishops, Kominek was in some ways dealing in a more familiar idiom than he was in addressing fellow Poles in Przemyśl or Siedlce. As a native of Prussian Silesia, he had gone to primary and secondary schools that taught almost exclusively in German, so it seemed natural for him to compose the original draft of the letter in German. Indeed, even his original notes for the letter were written in German.⁷⁸ His own self-

identification was, to be sure, clearly Polish throughout: he wrote in his notes, for example, that "German battle songs still ring in our ears." But he nonetheless adopted a rather detached tone in describing both the tendency of Polish newcomers to the western territories to favor a "strongly national" style of religious commemoration and the tendency of Germans to view this as evidence that Poles were "hopeless and irredeemable nationalists."⁷⁹ This disparity in viewpoints, he told an audience at Wrocław Cathedral, was a signal that future Polish rhetoric needed to be tweaked to have a "more psychologically penetrating character." "Subtlety," he emphasized, "does not mean and has not meant resigning from one's own national interests."⁸⁰

This last point was an apparent retort to an article in a government newspaper that accused Kominek of shamelessly trimming his rhetoric to suit his audience, speaking one way to Poles, another way to Germans.⁸¹ It might also, however, have been aimed at the anxieties of Cardinal Wyszyński, who accused the *regime* of pursuing "regional politics" in its exploitation of the bishops' letter controversy. Wyszyński's concerns, expressed in a talk to the diocesan clergy in Gnieźno, offer a revealing glimpse into the primate's view of both the power and the dangers of regional differentiation.

The same text [of a speech by party secretary Władysław Gomułka] is not distributed in all places in the same format or the same edition. The geographic grid is very interesting, because it takes into account the sensitivities and receptivities of a given environment. This is why what one can read in Warsaw, for example, is certainly not the same text that one can read in Poznań. It is edited in consideration of the receptivities and sensitivities of Poznań, Cracow, or Silesia, etc.⁸²

While meant to be critical, pointing to the regime's cynical manipulation of information, these remarks also contain an unmistakable tone of admiration. "Regional politics," one is left to conclude, was clever politics, attuned to what presumably *were* very different "sensitivities and receptivities" in various parts of Poland. To Wyszyński, these were not differences to mess around with and were best pushed to the background of what was, after all, supposed to be a year of celebrating Polish unity. But, as we have seen, not all leaders of Polish Catholicism

shared this view. For some, like Kominek, explicitly referencing the things that separated Polish Catholics seemed the most promising path to pulling them together.

Maryjane Osa once lamented that observers tended to regard the Catholic Church in Poland as “something monolithic, almost a phenomenon of nature—like Mount Everest.” It should be treated, she argued, as “more akin to Mount Rushmore: solid and imposing—but carefully crafted from the materials at hand.”⁸³ Scholars today still have far to go in following up on this admonition. Indeed, even Osa herself has sometimes brought in through the backdoor familiar stereotypes of Poland as “an essentially homogeneous ethnic community,” where “the church and religion ... were like the seasons, part of the tempo of rural life.”⁸⁴ If we are to see the making of Catholic Poland as a genuinely suspenseful, delicate, and open-ended process, it is necessary to pay closer attention to the various fissures within the Polish-Catholic edifice.

Such closer examination reveals that, from the checklist of elements uniting Catholic Poland—intensive religious observance, martyrdom under Nazi occupation, adherence to a “Christian West”—many were actually routinely invoked by priests, bishops, government officials, and a variety of other domestic and foreign observers as factors *dividing* Catholic Poland, even as factors dividing Catholicism from Polishness. Indeed, as Polish social scientists have recently come to note with fascination, when one attempts to map various indices of religious behavior and experience, the cartographic image that emerges is not a monochromatic block of ethnoreligious uniformity. Rather, the map reveals an uncanny resurrection of the partition era, suggesting, to an innocent observer, a Poland awkwardly pieced together from disparate “Prussian,” “Austrian,” and “Russian” pieces. While jarring to Polish intellectuals accustomed to imagining the partitions as an event that happened *to* Poland and Poles, not something that shaped who people *were*, these historical-regional cleavages were, as we have seen, often invoked in everyday, on-the-ground interactions among priests and laypeople, bishops and government officials. This is not to say that discourses of regional difference provided a more “accurate,” let alone more useful or desirable, template for understanding cultural identities. But they do reveal that many contemporary observers, whether advocates or skeptics of the creation of a homogeneous Catholic Po-

land, viewed it as a project requiring a lot of work, not an existing sociological reality. The current challenge for scholars—a challenge tackled in a very partial and preliminary way here—is to explore the complicated interplay between this narrative of precarious and contested nation-building and the more familiar story of church and state battling for hegemony across a homogeneous national space.

NOTES

- 1 This phrasing is from Joseph Rothschild's *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 80.
- 2 Claudia Kraft, "Who is a Pole, and Who is a German? The Province of Olsztyn in 1945," trans. Sean Ward, in Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak, eds., *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948* (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2004), 107–120; see particularly footnote 59.
- 3 Wincenty Urban, "Archidiecezja Wrocławska w latach 1945–1965," *Nasza Przyszłość* 22 (1965): 65, cited in Padraic Kenney, *Rebuilding Poland: Workers and Communists, 1945–1950* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 157.
- 4 Bolesław Kominek, "Mozaika na Opolszczyźnie," *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 1946, quoted in Alojzy Sitek, *Organizacja i kierunki działalności kurii Administracji Apostolskiej Śląska Opolskiego w latach 1945–1956* (Wrocław, 1986), 41.
- 5 Kominek, "Mozaika na Opolszczyźnie," 44–45.
- 6 Vincent C. Chrypinski, "Church and Nationality in Postwar Poland," in Pedro Ramet, ed., *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 241–263; quotes from 243.
- 7 For a survey of the enormous literature recently generated on the German Catholic milieu, see Arbeitskreis für kirchliche Geschichte, Münster, "Konfession und Cleavages im 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Erklärungsmodell zur regionalen Entstehung des katholischen Milieus in Deutschland," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 120 (2000): 358–395.
- 8 Quoted in Ralph Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism, 1789–1914* (London: Routledge, 1989), 170.
- 9 Sabino Acquaviva, "Italy," in Hans Mol, ed., *Western Religion: A Country by Country Sociological Inquiry* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1972), 315.
- 10 Paulina Almerich, "Spain," in *Western Religion*, 465.
- 11 For a typical example of such a typology, see Steve Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model," in Steve Bruce, ed., *Religion and Modernization: Sociologists and Historians Debate the Secularization Thesis* (Oxford:

- Clarendon Press, 1992), See also the introductory essay in Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflicts in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), in which the editors argue that Ireland and Poland did not experience the same kind of “culture wars” as the rest of Catholic Europe.
- 12 Władysław Piwowarski, ed., *Religijność ludowa, ciągłość i zmiana* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Wrocławskiej Księgarni Archidiecezjalnej, 1983), 108.
 - 13 Władysław Piwowarski, “Religijność miejska w dwudziestoleciu powojennym w Polsce,” *Znak* 18, no. 3 (March 1966): 294–317, statistics from 303–304.
 - 14 Quoted in Sitek, *Organizacja i kierunki działalności kurii*, 44.
 - 15 Quoted in Edward Ciupak, *Katolicyzm ludowy w Polsce* (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1973), 125.
 - 16 Sitek, *Organizacja i kierunki działalności kurii*, 46–47.
 - 17 Stanisław Ossowski, “Zagadnienia więzi regionalnej I więzi narodowej na Śląsku Opolskim,” in *Z zagadnień psychologii społecznej* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1967), 251–299, quotes from 280–283.
 - 18 Władysław Piwowarski, *Religijność miejska w rejonie uprzemysłowionym* (Warsaw: Więź, 1977), quote and statistics from 298.
 - 19 Władysław Piwowarski, *Praktyki religijne w diecezji warmińskiej: studium socjograficzne* (Warsaw: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1969), 132–135. It is worth noting that this relative index of Polish piety would have looked less impressive if Piwowarski had made some methodological adjustments to ensure he was comparing like with like. Figures from West German dioceses, for example, were calculated as a percentage of *all* Catholics; figures from Polish dioceses were calculated as a percentage of *obliged* Catholics (subtracting children and the infirm, usually estimated as 25 percent of all Catholics). If one makes the appropriate adjustments, the comparable average rate of Easter communion in West Germany in the early 1960s was 72 percent—roughly the same as the rough “average” for Poland that one could piece together from ad hoc diocesan studies of the time.
 - 20 *Ibid.*, 117–122.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, 139.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, 147. Frequency of communion in the Netherlands was, to be sure, exceptionally high, but figures from West Germany (average of fourteen annual communions per Catholic in 1950) were also well above Polish averages. Indeed, the *lowest* diocesan average in West Germany exceeded the *highest* diocesan average in Poland. *Kirchliches Handbuch: Amtliches statistisches Jahrbuch der katholischen Deutschlands*, Band XXVIII (1975–1976): 56–57.
 - 23 Piwowarski, “Religijność miejska,” 303–304.
 - 24 Józef Majka, “The Character of Polish Catholicism,” *Social Compass*, vols. 3–4 (1968): 197.
 - 25 *Ibid.*, 190.

- 26 Ibid., 194.
- 27 Edward Ciupak, *Parafianie?* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1961), “disintegration” reference from 147; see also *Kult Religijny i jego społeczne podłoże* (Warsaw: Ludowa Współdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1965); and *Religijność młodego Polaka* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1984).
- 28 Ciupak’s findings were originally published in *Argumenty i Fakty*, no. 37 (1964), 325; and later in *Kult religijny*, 367–369. See Majka, “Jaki,” for a representative response.
- 29 Ciupak, *Parafianie?*, 150.
- 30 In 1980, in the dioceses of Lublin and Warsaw (Russian Poland), 55 and 45 percent of parishes (respectively) had church attendance rates below 40 percent. In the diocese of Poznań (Prussian Poland), by contrast, less than 15 percent of parishes had rates in that range; in Tarnów (Austrian Poland), less than 2 percent. Piwowarski, “Religijność ludowa,” 112.
- 31 West German figures from *Kirchliches Handbuch*, vol. 28 (1975–1976), 56–57. All other statistics cited by Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789–1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 136–139;
- 32 For France: Danièle Hervieu-Léger, “Traces of Catholic Transnationalism: In and Beyond France,” trans. Roger Greaves, in *Transnational Religion and Fading States*, ed. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 107. For Germany: German Bishops Conference website, http://www.dbk.de/zahlen_fakten/statistik/index.html.
- 33 Data from 1980 through 2005 can be found on the website of the Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego: <http://www.iskk.ecclesia.org.pl/praktyki-niedzielne.htm>.
- 34 Data and maps were published in Witold Zdaniewicz and Tadeusz Zembrzuski, eds., *Kościół i religijność Polaków 1945–1999* (Warsaw: ISKK, 2000).
- 35 Jerzy Bartkowski, *Tradycja I polityka: Wpływ tradycji kulturowych polskich regionów na współczesne zachowania społeczne i polityczne* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Akademickie ŻAK, 2003). On religious factors in regionalism, see especially 249–254.
- 36 Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism,” in Geoff Eley and Ronald G. Suny, eds., *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 202–238; Ronald G. Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).
- 37 Studies of the relationship between notions of local *Heimat* and German nationhood provide useful points of reference here: Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990); and Alon Confino, *The Nation as Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871–1918* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

- 38 Hansjakob Stehle, *Die Ostpolitik des Vatikans, 1917–1975* (Munich: Piper & Co Verlag, 1975), 280–283; Jan Żaryn, *Stolica Apostolska wobec Polski i Polaków w latach 1944–1958: w świetle materiałów ambasady RP przy Watykanie* (Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 1998), 74.
- 39 Piotr Raina, *Kardynał Wyszyński: Konflikty roku milenijnego* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo von Borowiecky, 1998), 32.
- 40 Figures for clergy from Jerzy Myszor, *Historia Diecezji Katowickiej* (Katowice: Drukarnia Archidiecezjalnej, 2000), 328. Overall figures from Zofia Boda-Kreżel, *Sprawa Volkslisty na Górnym Śląsku: Koncepcje likwidacji problemu i ich realizacja* (Opole: Instytut Śląski, 1978).
- 41 Total figure on local men recruited to the Wehrmacht from “Memorial duchowieństwa diecezji katowickiej w sprawie stosunków kościelno-państwowych w diecezji katowickiej,” 18 October 1963, Urząd do Spraw Wyznań (UdSW), Wydział Wyznania Rzymskokatolickiej (WWR) 78/49 (Kuria w Katowicach za lata 1963–1966), Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN). Figure for diocesan clergy from Myszor, *Historia*, 333.
- 42 Zygmunt Woźniczka, “Wysiedlenia ludności górnośląskiej do ZSRR wiosną 1945 r.,” *Studia Śląskie* 59 (2000): 135–161; and Adam Dziurok, ed., *Obóz pracy w Świątchłowice w 1945 roku: dokumenty, zeznania, relacje, listy* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2003).
- 43 The classic multi-volume work from the 1950s, simultaneously published in English, is Theodor Schieder, ed., *Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mittleuropa* (Bonn: Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, 1954–1961). A more recent, and much less pathos-ridden, collection of documents from Polish archives: Włodzimierz Borodziej and Hans Lemberg, eds., “Unsere Heimat ist uns fremdes Land geworden...” *Die Deutschen östlich von Oder und Neiße 1945–1950. Dokumente aus polnischen Archiven* (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2003), 4 volumes.
- 44 See, for example, Johannes Kaps, ed., *Die Tragödie Schlesiens 1945/46 in Dokumenten* (Munich: “Christ Unterwegs,” 1952–1953).
- 45 On “Asiatic” and “Judaeo-Bolshevik” themes in the early expulsion literature, see Robert Moeller, *War Stories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 64–66, 74–82.
- 46 Wanda Maria Wanatowicz, *Od indifferenentnej ludności do śląskiej narodowości? Postawy narodowości autochtonicznej Górnego Śląska w latach 1945–2003 w świadomości społecznej* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2004), 100–101.
- 47 Stanisław Adamski, “Memorial w sprawie wysiedlenia niektórych obywateli polskich do Niemiec,” January 8, 1947, printed in Kornelia Banaś and Adam Dziurok, eds., *Represje wobec duchowieństwo górnośląskiego w latach 1939–1956 w dokumentach* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2003), 133–150.
- 48 Stanisław Adamski, *Pogląd na rozwój sprawy narodowościowej w województwie śląskim w czasie okupacji niemieckiej* (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1946), 15–23.

- 49 Figures and characterizations for priests in Opole region are from a letter of Hlond to Vatican Secretary of State, October 24, 1946, reproduced in Peter Raina, ed., *Kościół w PRL*, vol. 1, 1945–1959 (Poznań: W drodze, 1994), 54. Estimates of total numbers “rehabilitated” as Poles in interwar Polish Silesia (1.1 million) and “verified” as Poles in Opole Silesia (850,000–875,000) from Wanatowicz, *Od indyferentnej*, 52–53.
- 50 See figures on rehabilitation of *Volksdeutschen* in other regions in Piotr Madajczyk, *Niemcy polscy 1944–1989* (Warsaw: Oficyna Naukowa, 2001), 33–34. On Olsztyn (Warmia and Mazuria), see *Unsere Heimat*, vol. 1, 415; on Gdańsk region, see *Unsere Heimat*, vol. 4, 38.
- 51 Based on an estimate of 8,000 Polish diocesan clergy at the end of the war, Maryjane Osa, “Resistance, Persistence, and Change: The Transformation of the Catholic Church in Poland,” *East European Politics and Societies* 3, no. 2 (1989): 276.
- 52 Duda to Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego w Katowicach, November 16, 1948, printed in *Represje wobec duchowieństwo górnośląskiego*, 151–153.
- 53 Adamski to editors of *Trybuna Robotnicza*, April 11, 1949, printed in *ibid.*, 186–191, with supplemental notes. See also Krzysztof Kowalczyk, *Zróżnicowanie represji wobec duchowieństwa na ziemiach polskich (1945–1956)*, in Jerzy Myszor and Adam Dziurok, eds., *Represje wobec Kościołów chrześcijańskich w okresie stalinowskim w krajach byłego bloku wschodniego* (Katowice: Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2004), 182–202.
- 54 UdSW Katowice, to UdSW Warsaw, December 9, 1965. UdSW, WWR138/122, AAN.
- 55 Myszor, *Historia*, 523–524.
- 56 Quoted in Sitek, *Organizacja i kierunki działalności kurii*, 49–52.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 42–45.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 53.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 51.
- 60 *Ibid.*, 44.
- 61 See biographies in *Słownik biograficzny katolickiego duchowieństwa śląskiego XIX i XX wieku* (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1996), 134–139, 180–185, 207–211.
- 62 Osa, “Resistance,” 286–288.
- 63 Piwowarski, *Praktyki religijne*, 140–141. Frequency of communion has also been used by students of German Catholicism to provide a rough measure of “milieu intensity,” distinguishing dense and disciplined subcultures like those of the Ruhr from more traditional Catholic subcultures like rural Bavaria. See Arbeitskreis für kirchliche Zeitgeschichte, “Konfession und Cleavages im 19. Jahrhundert. Ein Erklärungsmodell zur regionalen Entstehung des katholischen Milieus in Deutschland,” *Historisches Jahrbuch* 120 (2000): 358–395.
- 64 Józef Majka, “Poland,” in *Western Religion*, 414.
- 65 *Ibid.* The dissertation was published as a book thirty-five years later: Rajmund Bigdon, *Religijność mieszkańców Bytomia w dobie industrializacji* (Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2004).

- 66 Daniel Olszewski, *Polska kultura religijna na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* (Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy Pax, 1996), 247.
- 67 Quoted by Bishop Damian Zimoń of Katowice in introduction to *Postawy społeczne-religijne mieszkańców archidiecezji katowickiej*, ed. Witold Zdanie-wicz and Tadeusz Zembrzusi (Katowice: Księgarnia św. Jacka, 1999), 7.
- 68 Jan Kubik, *The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland* (University Park: Penn-sylvania State University Press, 1994), 127–128.
- 69 Maryjane Osa, *Solidarity and Contention: Networks of Polish Opposition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 75–78.
- 70 Kubik, *The Power of Symbols*, 127–128.
- 71 Bolesław Kominek, *W służbie ziem zachodnich*, prepared by Ks. Jan Kruci-na (Wrocław: Kuria Metropolitalna, 1977), 97–98.
- 72 Stenogram of sermon at Opole Cathedral, August 14, 1966, UdSW, WWR 78/21 (Działalność ks. Bka. B. Kominek), AAN.
- 73 Stenogram of sermon in Przemyśl Cathedral, August 20, 1966, UdSW, WWR 78/21, AAN.
- 74 Stenogram of sermon at Siedlce Cathedral, September 18, 1966, UdSW, WWR 78/21, AAN.
- 75 Stenogram of sermon at Olsztyn Cathedral, April 19, 1966, UdSW, WWR 78/21, AAN.
- 76 On the bishops' letters, see Edith Heller, *Macht, Kirche, Politik, Der Brief-wechsel zwischen den polnischen und deutschen Bischöfen im Jahre 1965* (Co-logne: Ost-West-Verlag, 1992); Piotr Madajczyk, *Na drodze do pojednania, wokół orędzie biskupów polskich do biskupów niemieckich z 1965 roku* (War-saw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994); and Stehle, *Ostpolitik*, 377–378.
- 77 Stenogram of sermon at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Wrocław, February 13, 1966, UdSW, WWR 78/21, AAN.
- 78 A copy of Kominek's "thoughts and suggestions on German-Polish dialogue" was later taken from Kominek's secretary when the secretary crossed the Polish frontier: UdSW, WWR 78/41, AAN. On Kominek's ear-ly life, see biographical entry in Pater, ed., *Słownik biograficzny katolickiego* 180–184.
- 79 From "Thoughts and Suggestions." See footnote 66.
- 80 Stenogram of sermon at Wrocław cathedral, February 6, 1966, UdSW, WWR 78/21, AAN.
- 81 "Ks. Abp. Kominek wyjaśnia..." *Słowo Powszechne*, January 25, 1966, 6.
- 82 Quoted in Raina, *Kardynał*, 18.
- 83 Osa, "Resistance," 268.
- 84 Maryjane Osa, *Solidarity and Contention: Networks of Polish Opposition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 77–78 (first quote) and 66 (second quote).

Competing Concepts of “Reunification” behind the Liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

NATALIA SHLIKHTA

Introduction

The L’viv Council of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, convoked by order of the Soviet regime on March 8, 1946, declared the “unanimous willingness” of the faithful of the Church in Eastern Galicia to “liquidate the Union, break all ties with the Vatican, and return to the Holy Orthodox faith of our ancestors and the Russian Orthodox Church.”¹ The Council’s decision, considered uncanonical by the majority of observers at the time and scholars in the decades to come, put an end to the legal functioning of the Catholic Church of the Eastern Rite in Western Ukraine, which had come into existence as a result of the 1596 Union of Brest. Just over three years later the Union with Rome was also liquidated in Transcarpathian Ukraine. This act of liquidation, accomplished without any formal council, was announced on August 28, 1949, during the celebration of the feast of the Assumption in the St. Nicolas Convent in Mukachevo. Archbishop Makarii (Oksiiuk) of the L’viv-Ternopil and Mukachevo-Uzhhorod Dioceses assessed the historical significance of this event: “A blessed time has finally come when the Union with Rome is liquidated on the whole territory of our Rus-Ukraine, which is Orthodox since time immemorial.”²

As a result of these events, the ecclesiastical situation in Western Ukraine changed quite visibly. Neither Soviet state archives nor church archives provide figures for the religious adherence of the West Ukrainian population after the official liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. However, available data on church networks in Western and Transcarpathian Ukraine—approached with all the necessary reservations with regards to Soviet statistics—point convincingly to

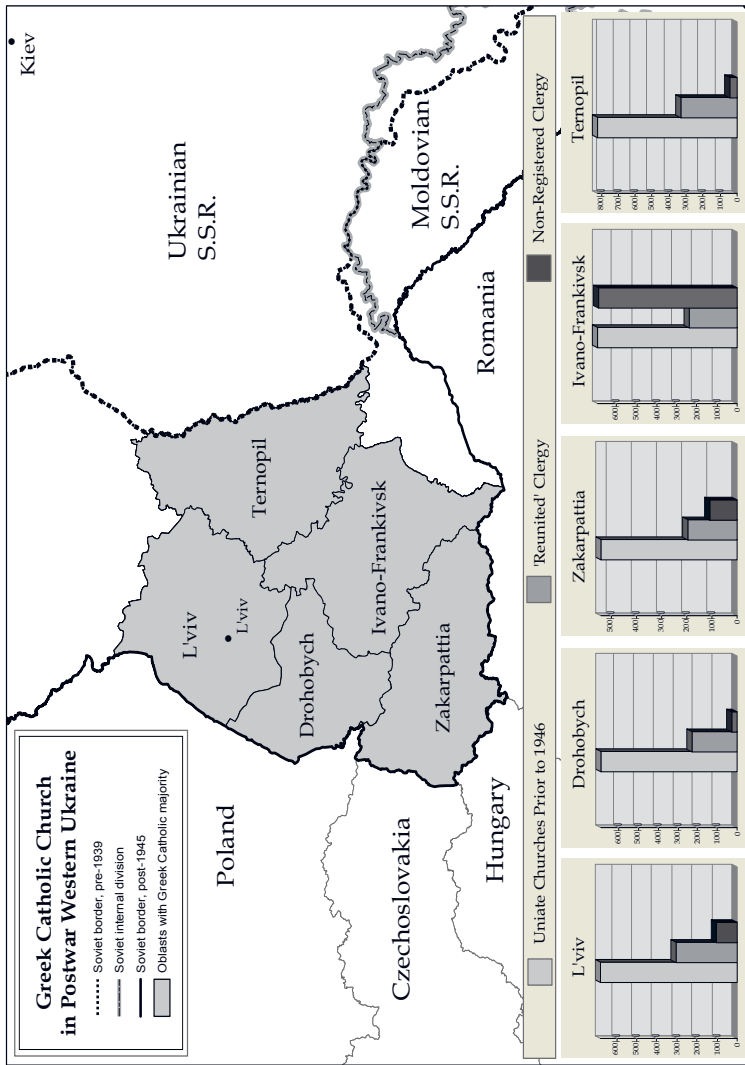
the fact that the vast majority of Greek Catholic Christians *did* “return the Holy Orthodox faith of [their] ancestors and the Russian Orthodox Church.” The official data for 1959 state that 3,289 out of 3,431 Greek Catholic parishes were registered as Orthodox, while 1,296 out of 1,643 Greek Catholic priests pledged their allegiance to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.³ In the same year Soviet officials recorded only eighteen unofficially functioning Greek Catholic churches. These records mention 347 non-registered priests, only ninety-seven of whom are designated as “active catacomb priests.”⁴

As if disregarding these visible achievements of reunification, Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), exarch of Ukraine, offered a considerably different assessment of the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1971, the year of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the L’viv Council. In a speech to the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, he stated:

Over the last twenty-five years, our episcopate and clergy have accomplished a lot in order to overcome the consequences of the Union and strengthen the Orthodox consciousness [of the former Greek Catholics]. However, we cannot ignore that the Union, which existed for 350 years, undoubtedly influenced both church consciousness and rituals... [Therefore] the episcopate and clergy must continue to undertake every thoughtful effort to overcome the consequences of the Union, while simultaneously taking a careful approach [to the process of orthodoxization] and preserving those local church customs and rituals that do not contradict Orthodox teaching.⁵

Instead of treating the liquidation of the Union as an accomplished event (as, for example, Archbishop Makarii did in 1949), Metropolitan Filaret described it as a process that was still underway in 1971. Moreover, he warned against the artificial acceleration of this process.

Despite obvious parallels, the anti-Uniate action in Western Ukraine differed considerably from the contemporaneous anti-Uniate action in Romania, examined in other papers presented at our conference in Warsaw. The state was neither “the artisan” of the reunification, as Anca Șincan argued in the case of Romania, nor did it aim to “reward” the Orthodox Church for its collaboration, as Lucian Leus-



Map 2.

As the graphs show, Ivano-Frankivsk oblast had an unusually high number of unregistered Uniate clergy. As an explanation for this disparity, one can look at the oblast's unique ecclesiastical legacy. For forty years after 1904 the head of the local diocese of the Greek Catholic Church (Stanislaviv diocese) was by Bishop Hryhorii Khomyshyn (1867–1945), one of the most prominent opponents of "Easternizers" wing within the Church and author of many reforms aimed at furthering "Latin" practices, such as celibacy of the clergy and introduction of the Gregorian calendar. As a result, this diocese was the most "Latinized" in Western Ukraine, and members of its clergy were the least prepared and inclined to "reunite" with the Orthodox Church.

tean claimed.⁶ The Soviet government was the creator and driving force of the reunification, and it pragmatically employed the Orthodox Church to advance its aims—modernization and national assimilation—in Western Ukraine.

A forcible liquidation of the Uniate Church—as the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was referred to in Soviet discourse—was a predictable outcome of the Soviet takeover of Eastern Galicia in 1939 and Transcarpathian Ukraine in 1945. The Uniate Church was considered an obstacle to the Soviet modernization project in Western Ukraine, for which secularization was both a necessary condition and an inevitable outcome. And, as a Ukrainian national church, it was also a serious obstacle to the assimilation of the population in this newly acquired territory.

The regime's decision to dissolve the Uniate Church through reunification can only be comprehended in the light of the regime's earlier experiences with the Russian Orthodox Church. During the antireligious assaults of the 1920s and 1930s, Soviet authorities learned that to liquidate the Church, they needed to do more than simply destroy the hierarchy and clergy. The regime, positioning itself as bearer of the most progressive (and atheist) ideology, realized that the destruction of the Church's institutional structure was not equal to the destruction of the Church or to the reduction of the relevance of Christianity. Upon the destruction of the Church's institutional framework, state authorities faced the challenge of the "uncontrolled masses of believers," whom there was no way "to get rid of" (the wording of official documents).⁷ The situation in Western Ukraine in the 1940s was even more complicated. Upon the extinction of the official Uniate Church, the Greek Catholic faithful, who constituted the vast majority of the population in the region, could turn to the Roman Catholic Church. The post-1946 experience proved that this option was pursued by many of those who refused to convert to Orthodoxy.

Faced with this situation, the communist regime did not even consider simply eliminating the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church as an institution. A number of considerations, examined in the following pages, forced Soviet officials to recognize that liquidation of the Uniate hierarchy had to be accompanied by "orthodoxization" of the Greek Catholic faithful, clergy, and local churches. "Orthodoxization" (*pravoslavnoe votserkovlenie*) was the term used in official documents

to describe the process of bringing the patterns of ecclesiastical life in Western Ukraine nearer to those of the Moscow Patriarchate. Even though the preservation of Eastern Orthodox rituals and local ecclesiastical traditions had been an essential condition of the Union of Brest, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church had undergone considerable transformation under the influence of Rome in the centuries after the Union, from the performance of rituals to the appearance of clergy and churches. At the same time, the religious life of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine had also transformed significantly after the 1686 change in its ecclesiastical subordination from Constantinople to the Moscow Patriarchate. Soviet-mandated orthodoxization therefore required the merging of worship practices that had diverged for more than two centuries.

The fact that these attempts at orthodoxization were inspired by republican and local government agents rather than the Orthodox Church is suggestive of the role of the Russian episcopate in the reunification process. The involvement of the Moscow Patriarchate in the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is often debated in scholarly literature. Post-Soviet historians are inclined to justify the Patriarchate's role by stressing that it was compelled by the regime, "had no choice," and displayed little willingness to assimilate the reunited flock.⁸ In contrast to this interpretation, I advance the argument that the Russian Orthodox Church's pragmatic desire to take advantage of its new role as an instrument of Soviet policies in Western Ukraine, and thereby secure its own position in the Soviet state, led to a cautious approach to the integration of West Ukrainian Christians.

This paper examines the concepts of reunification advanced by Soviet officials and Orthodox ecclesiastical authorities. "Reunification" was the official term used in Soviet and church documents to designate the change in West Ukrainian Greek Catholics' ecclesiastical subordination from the Vatican to the Moscow Patriarchate.⁹ However, contrary to the anticipations of Soviet and Russian Orthodox authorities, West Ukrainian Christians—clergy and faithful of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church—did not remain simply objects of the official reunification campaign. They became active subjects, turning reunification into a means of resisting Moscow's antireligious and assimilatory policies. In explaining the ultimate failure of this so-called reunification, a failure that became evident with the revival of the Ukrainian Greek

Catholic Church in the early 1990s,¹⁰ I argue that a key factor in the campaign's limited success was the incompatible understandings of reunification and religious and civic identity held by the Soviet authorities, Orthodox leadership, and West Ukrainian Christians.

The study has two aims. First, it seeks to contribute to the ambitious task of revising the dominant collaboration-resistance discourse in the study of religion in the communist states. Second, it seeks to offer insights into the complexity of state-society relations under Soviet rule. The research demonstrates that the life of the church under communism can be better understood by taking note of issues ignored by mainstream historiography, with its presentation of state-church relations according to the dichotomy of collaboration/compromise versus resistance/opposition.

View of Reunification by Soviet Authorities

The communist regime initiated and led the reunification, which was intended to serve the aims of Soviet policy in Western Ukraine. The Moscow Patriarchate, through its involvement in the campaign for the reunification, was to become the state's provisional instrument for assimilating West Ukrainian Christians.

The regime's decision to liquidate the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was conditioned by an anti-Vatican objective, considerations of Soviet ecclesiastical-nationalities policy,¹¹ the regime's intolerance to the political philosophy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (namely, its adherence to the idea of the separation of church and state), and its unwillingness to accept the Church's image as a socially active institution that counted as adherents an overwhelming majority of the population in Western Ukraine.

To properly understand the state's project, it is essential to know why and how reunification of Greek Catholics with the Russian Orthodox Church and their orthodoxization advanced the objectives of Soviet policy in Western Ukraine. Analyzing Soviet religious policy, Vasyl Markus argues, "Religion, like nationality and democracy, is viewed not abstractedly but specifically, as a concrete phenomenon or situation in a given setting of events and interacting forces."¹² In some settings, religion was seen as "useful," while in other settings it

was seen as "a nuisance or an outright social-political peril."¹³ Here, Markus clearly distinguishes between a Church that assisted the regime in its attempt to assimilate West Ukrainians (the Russian Orthodox Church) and a Church that was viewed by the regime as an obstacle to this assimilation (the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church). The study of the reunification also discloses the regime's pragmatic attitude towards the Russian Orthodox Church. This Church was a "social nuisance" and sometimes even a "social-political peril" in a state where a grandiose modernization project was launched in the 1930s. The persecutions of religious groups in the 1920s and 1930s found their continuation in Nikita Khrushchev's antireligious campaign of 1958–1964. This latter offensive, variously described as a persecution comparable to that of Nero and Diocletian (Bourdeaux), as a "war" aimed at the complete destruction of the Church and religion (Shkarovsky), as "political war" (Chumachenko), and as a "latent civil war" (Merkatun), was primarily directed against the Russian Orthodox Church.¹⁴

Nonetheless, this persecution notwithstanding, the Russian Orthodox Church served as the regime's ally in Western Ukraine since the 1940s. In the post-1943 atmosphere of state-church rapprochement, cooperation between Soviet authorities and the Orthodox Church in the liquidation of another church appeared less unexpected than it would under any other circumstance. The ideological incompatibility of the Stalinist regime and the Russian national church was "overshadowed by their joint identification with the traditional Russian interest," of which hostility to the Greek Catholic Union and Ukrainian nationalism was a distinctive feature.¹⁵ According to Bohdan Bociurkiw, the liquidation of the Union became necessary after the rehabilitation of the Russian imperial heritage in the 1930s. The ecclesiastical-nationalities policy of the Soviet regime in Western Ukraine was the culmination of the policies of Catherine the Great; Nicholas I, who liquidated the Union in the Russian partition of Ukraine in 1839; and Alexander III, who liquidated the Union in Chełm in 1875.¹⁶ Integration of the Ukrainian Greek Catholics into Soviet society required their national, social, and political assimilation; an important precondition for this was their religious conversion, the negating of their distinctive religious identity.

Seeing no other way of liquidating the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, state authorities found it advantageous to accept the Russian

Orthodox Church's claim of its own Soviet identity, which they were unlikely to accept under other circumstances.¹⁷ The regime took for granted an Orthodox-Soviet linkage in implementing its social, national, and religious policies in Western Ukraine. In official documents, the term "orthodoxization" became almost synonymous with "sovietization" and "national assimilation." The progress of orthodoxization was viewed as "the progress of Soviet [socialist] construction" in Western Ukraine¹⁸ in state documents from the 1940s and 1950s, while state authorities insisted that the Greek Catholic faithful, unlike the Orthodox, could never become "Soviet citizens enjoying full rights."¹⁹

But, even though the Russian Orthodox Church could advance state interests in Western Ukraine, the authorities' attitude towards it remained restrained. Petro Vilkhovyi, representative of the Council for Affairs of Religious Cults in the Ukrainian Republic, stated in a report on February 2, 1948, that assistance in the reunification campaign was among the "most important national tasks" carried out by state organs.²⁰ He nonetheless criticized the inclination of the Ukrainian republican and local authorities to distinguish Orthodox and Uniate clergy, respectively, as "progressive" and "reactionary," or "Soviet" and "anti-Soviet." He explained, "In the eyes of Soviet power and the Communist Party all religious cults are equal: We [have to] stand against them all."²¹ Ultimately, state authorities viewed reunification and orthodoxization as steps that were both necessary and undesirable. The policies were not meant to strengthen the Russian Orthodox Church; they were instead a temporary strategy that would hasten the secularization of West Ukrainian Christians. This line of reasoning was disclosed when Khrushchev's antireligious campaign began in the late 1950s.

From a purely pragmatic standpoint, the regime's unwillingness to openly acknowledge the pro-Soviet stance of the Russian Orthodox Church was aimed at presenting the reunification solely as an internal church affair. Even under the conditions of the 1943 state-church rapprochement, the atheist regime was embarrassed by its cooperation with the Orthodox Church and by the common perception that officials of the Council for Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, the agency responsible for overseeing the reunification, were working on behalf of the Moscow Patriarchate's ecclesiastical ambitions. The dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church brought its former clergy and

bishops under the purview of this Council (formerly, the Greek Catholic Church—like other non-Orthodox and non-Christian institutions—had been under the jurisdiction of the Council for Affairs of Religious Cults). Consequently, many West Ukrainian Christians came to view local officials, or “plenipotentiaries” (*upolnomochennye*), of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church as “plenipotentiaries of/missionaries for the Russian Orthodox Church,” an impression that the Soviet state could not tolerate.²² State authorities recognized that they could not “count only on the clergy” of the Orthodox Church in the campaign against the remnants of the Union. “We have to lead [this struggle],” local officials were instructed. Still, Soviet officials also believed it possible to “accomplish those measures that are for our interests by priests’ hands.”²³ This strategy—directing a process for the benefit of the state, while using priests to carry it out and seeking to present the whole matter as an internal Church affair—was difficult, and local officials often did not fulfill Moscow’s expectations. The Council’s leadership criticized those republican and local officials who followed too literally the instruction to take the lead and thus not only disclosed to the public “but also stress[ed] that reunification is not solely the matter of the Church but a state matter as well.”²⁴

View of Reunification by the Ukrainian Republican and Local Officials

Examination of the reunification campaign provides insight into the study of policy adaptation in the communist state, and particularly its changes to the advantage of a particular religious group (or disadvantage of another), as has been outlined in the previous section. We find that what was described by Sabrina Ramet as the “local policy adaptation” was quite frequently adopted by local authorities in defiance of the central authorities.²⁵ Decisions by the Moscow authorities were not unconditionally carried out by the Ukrainian republican authorities in Kyiv, and decisions by the Kyiv authorities were not unconditionally carried out at a local level. In an examination of the state reunification project, three levels of policymaking must be clearly distinguished. The first level, that of the Soviet government in Moscow, was examined in the previous section. The other two levels are the republican and lo-

cal levels. When local policy adaptation in the USSR is analyzed, the role of republican and local officials of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church remains largely neglected. This neglect is surprising, given that the state agents' actual importance in administering the Church far exceeded their legally defined responsibilities as "mediators" between the Church and state bodies (Article 6 of the 1943 Statutes of the Council).²⁶ Local officials were quick to assume full control over church life in their oblasts.²⁷

This exercise of authority at the local level was particularly important in the process of reunification. The state's campaign against the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church consisted of two stages. The first stage, reunification in the strict sense, presumed to liquidate the ecclesiastical structure of the Church by reuniting its clergy with the Russian Orthodox Church and appropriating church property in Western Ukraine to the Moscow Patriarchate. The second stage was a process of orthodoxization in the reunited dioceses that would bring the patterns of Greek Catholic life into proximity with those of the Russian Orthodox Church. Disregarding Moscow's instructions to rely on the Orthodox Church, Ukrainian republican and local officials were convinced that it was "virtually impossible to remain completely neutral in the issue of the reunification."²⁸ This understanding resulted from the agents' close acquaintance with the implementation of reunification and orthodoxization. Further, they realized that it was impossible for the Russian Orthodox Church to accomplish this task of "foremost political significance" relying only on its own limited institutional resources. The republican and local officials recognized that they had to intervene in the transformation of Greek Catholic to Orthodox practice.

Secondly, local officials were aware that every aspect of orthodoxization acquired a political importance and was inseparably linked to the advancement of the interests of the Soviet state in Western Ukraine. This view coincided only in part with that of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Council's leadership viewed the liquidation of the Union as a "national task," and it instructed local agents to not ignore the politically significant aspects of orthodoxization. Some major political aspects of orthodoxization included the introduction of prayers for the patriarch of Moscow, the Orthodox episcopate, and the Soviet state, instead of the prayer for the

pope, and the removal from churches of Uniate icons and other church attributes with a markedly "nationalistic" appearance. Simultaneously, however, state agents were told not to intervene in changes of a dogmatic and canonical character as well as changes in the everyday life of the religious community with no political significance, namely, the appearance of churches and priests, performance of ritual, prayers, etc.²⁹ The Council in Moscow warned local officials not to accelerate the orthodoxization process but rather to leave the changes to ecclesiastical authorities.

Unlike the leadership in Moscow, the Council's functionaries in the Ukrainian Republic realized that partial involvement in the reunification campaign would not accomplish the objectives of Soviet ecclesiastical-nationalities policy in Western Ukraine. These officials in Western Ukraine viewed as artificial any differentiation between those aspects of orthodoxization that were politically significant and those that had no broader political implications.³⁰ In their view, as long as the reunited dioceses preserved any distinctive feature in the performance of the liturgy and sacraments, the appearance of priests and churches, and so on, they retained their distinctiveness as a community that was only formally and mechanically incorporated into the Orthodox Church. This understanding reflected an appreciation of the role of material culture, the ways in which, as Colleen McDannell explains, objects such as images, vestments, candles, and church buildings contribute to "bringing about [specific] religious values, norms, behaviors, and attitudes."³¹ This awareness, perhaps no less a determinative factor than the requirements from Moscow, turned Soviet officials in Western Ukraine into "plenipotentiaries of / missionaries for the Russian Orthodox Church." Local officials played the leading role in the deanery meetings of Greek Catholic clergy that preceded the L'viv Council of 1946. Typically, the local official took charge of the "legalization of the ecclesiastical reunification" (*oformlenie tserkovnogo vossoedineniia*). And parish priests were summoned first to the office of the local representative of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church to sign reunification pledges. Only afterward did the state official direct the priests to the diocesan bishop, whose formal duty was to canonically introduce them to the Orthodox Church.³²

The eagerness of state officials to take the leading role in the legalization of the ecclesiastical reunification effectively served their goal

of accelerating that formal procedure, but it had far-reaching and, for Soviet authorities, undesirable implications. A procedure conducted in state offices allowed the Greek Catholic clergy to regard their signatures on reunification pledges as an official formality that did not violate their vows to the Holy See. The fact that they were required to pledge their allegiance to the Orthodox Church by an atheist representative of the state that persecuted religion only strengthened their conviction that reunification was a mere contrivance. In an interview, Iaroslava Datsyshyna, wife of Fr. Mykhailo Datsyshyn, a priest in the village of Nezhukhiv in L'viv Oblast, recalled his view of the signing of the reunification pledge:

And afterwards? Did your husband have to subscribe to Orthodoxy according to church procedure?

Datsyshyna: No.

Does this mean that there was only that document which he signed [with the state official]?

Datsyshyna: Yes, only that document, which he signed in the *raispolkom*.

Does this mean that he did not renounce his [Greek Catholic] faith?

Datsyshyna: No, he did not renounce his faith.³³

After the formal procedure of the reunification was completed, local cadres continued to keep the orthodoxization under close surveillance, initiating periodical checks of reunited parishes. Officials were primarily concerned with the formula that reunited clergy used in their prayers for the hierarchy. Six years after the L'viv Council, state functionaries observed, "Even today, many reunited priests pray for the Orthodox hierarchy in such a manner that the faithful cannot catch for whom they pray."³⁴ They also paid attention to those aspects of the orthodoxization that, in the view of the Council's leadership, had no political significance, such as the performance of the liturgy and rituals, local religious customs, and appearance of churches. State cadres did this because they understood the importance of religion's material dimension and were aware that any local distinctiveness remained an obstacle to the religious, and hence social, national, and political, assimilation of West Ukrainians.³⁵

View of Reunification by Orthodox Ecclesiastical Authorities

Scholars refer to the Moscow Patriarchate's cautious policy regarding reunited brethren to argue that reunification was exclusively a state project, absolving the Patriarchate of responsibility in the liquidation of a fellow church. The assumption that the Moscow patriarch played a marginal role in the reunification campaign can be supported by a critical analysis of archival sources, oral testimony, and the official periodical of the Moscow Patriarchate. Furthermore, this critical analysis prompts the claim that the religious conversion of West Ukrainians was more in the interests of the state than it was in the interests of the Church. Because orthodoxization was the only viable approach to the sovietization of West Ukrainian Christians, the regime was not satisfied with slow changes in their religious life and partial achievements of Orthodox missionary activities. By contrast, sources suggest that ecclesiastical authorities exerted little control over orthodoxization and that the Patriarchate was satisfied with minimal external changes in the religious practice of the reunited community.

In my view, such evidence both confirms the dependence of ecclesiastical authorities on the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and sheds light on their pragmatism. Because of their inability (mainly due to the absence of required institutional resources) to integrate several million Greek Catholics quickly and completely, the Patriarchal authorities opted for a slow process of orthodoxization and a policy of concessions as the only feasible strategy in Western Ukraine. This careful approach was first articulated by Patriarch Alexei in a letter of December 7, 1945, to the Chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church: "We will not insist on the rapid and violent change of the external forms of church service and even clergy appearance... Only essential changes are important."³⁶ An equally important reason for a cautious approach was the pragmatic desire by the Patriarchate to secure its position as an ally of the regime. As an agent serving to "integrate, denationalize, and assimilate or, more precisely, to sovietize and Russify" the population of Western Ukraine,³⁷ the Moscow Patriarchate acquired a bargaining power in its relationship with the state.

The Patriarchal authorities' view of reunification did not remain unchallenged over the decades after the L'viv Council. Contrary to what might be expected, the approach evolved from a virtual noninvolvement in the state campaign to a time when these authorities adopted the role of active fighters against the "remnants of the Union." The initial approach of ecclesiastical orthodoxy drew from its traditionally scornful attitude towards the particularism and material expressions of popular religion. The Moscow Patriarchate expected that the formal reunification of West Ukrainian Greek Catholics implied their conversion to Orthodoxy, while local ritual practices and customs were doomed to slowly disappear over time. By the mid-1950s it became apparent that this expectation was false and that more persistent efforts were required to orthodoxize the reunited flock. In 1954 the editors of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchy* observed that former Uniates continued "to celebrate the liturgy using Roman (Catholic) prayer books and... a Roman (Catholic) spirit continues to manifest itself not only in sacramental customs but also in dogmatic understanding. It is quite possible that we [contribute to the] strengthening of the position of the enemies of Our Church and Our Motherland when we silence this."³⁸

Simultaneously, the bargaining situation that was behind the 1943 state-church concordat was losing its validity, as Nikita Khrushchev launched a renewed antireligious campaign. The Orthodox Church was forced to search for alternative means of securing its position in the Soviet state. The only bargaining tool at the Church's disposal was the establishment of an inseparable linkage between the interests of the Russian Orthodox Church and the interests of the Soviet state, and the intensification of the "patriotic work" (as orthodoxization was commonly defined in church documents) in Western Ukraine.

The ecclesiastical authorities' attempt to exploit the West Ukrainian situation to strike a bargain with the regime is evident in the notions of reunification and orthodoxization that the Patriarchate advanced. On April 23, 1966, during festivities in L'viv devoted to the twentieth anniversary of the L'viv Council, Archbishop Alexei (Ridiger) of Tallinn and Estonia, head of the Chancellery of the Moscow Patriarchate, delivered a speech in which he expanded on the "national-political aspect" of the struggle against the Union in Western Ukraine. Presenting a detailed survey of the ecclesiastical history of "South-Western Rus" (*Iugo-Zapadnaia Rus*) from the perspective of national politics, he brief-

ly remarked only in conclusion that there was also an additional "religious and theological (*religiozno-bogoslovsky*) aspect" of this centuries-long struggle.³⁹

Analogous formulations are abundant in Metropolitan Filaret's official messages. The reunification of the "separated brethren" was described as their "liberation from national egoism and a way to overcoming hostility and separation [of the Eastern Slavs]."⁴⁰ The Union represented a political, not a religious, separation of the Slavs, while the reunification contributed to the reestablishment of the unity of the Ukrainian and Russian people. Such was the central message of Metropolitan Filaret's official speech during the 1971 Local Council.⁴¹ Regardless of their own ecclesiastical ambitions, the Moscow Patriarchate found it advisable to consider the liquidation of the Union in national-political rather than religious terms. It was no coincidence that church discourse conformed with the clichés of official Soviet rhetoric.

The "struggle against the Union," to use a conventional formulation from church documents, enabled the Russian Orthodox Church to lay claim to its Soviet identity, which was its declared civic identity ever since the 1927 Proclamation by Metropolitan Sergei (Stragorodsky). In order for the state to advance its objectives, it had to accept this claim. Communist authorities were forced to concede that the terms "Orthodox" and "Soviet," "orthodoxization" and "sovietization" had become synonymous in the West Ukrainian setting. The official Church never failed to remind the regime of this inseparable linkage. This helped to secure the position of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet state and prevent its isolation from society, which was the major aim of the regime's secularization effort. At the same time that the government branded the Church a "socially alien" body within the Soviet state, the Patriarchate's affirmation of the Orthodox-Soviet linkage countered these attempts to present the Church as a "traditionalist," "obsolete" institution irrelevant to the needs of Soviet society.⁴² Moreover, this approach allowed ecclesiastical authorities to compel the regime to modify, at least slightly, antireligious policies and make certain concessions in Western Ukraine (for instance, reducing taxes and closing fewer churches, monasteries and convents, and theological schools in the reunited dioceses).⁴³

The claim that the Moscow Patriarchate sought to stay apart from the Soviet regime's reunification campaign is misleading, because it

ignores the Patriarchate's appreciation of the leverage gained as a result of the coincidence of its aims and the state's policies in Western Ukraine. The Orthodox Church's approach to the reunification was less determined by its centuries-long ecclesiastical ambitions regarding the "separated brethren" than it was by its pragmatic desire to find an effective means of survival in the Soviet state.

Reunification from Below I: The Views of the "Sponsoring Group"

As creator of the reunification, the state attempted to present the campaign solely as an internal church affair. This version of events presumed that the Moscow Patriarchate had a leading role in the assimilation of West Ukrainians. It also presumed that the reunification was to be initiated from below, with West Ukrainian Greek Catholics craving to "return" to their "mother church." To present these "aspirations" of West Ukrainian Christians, security agencies and the state church-affairs councils created in May 1945 the so-called "Sponsoring Group for the Reunion of the Greek Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church." Since none of the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church agreed to participate, the original Sponsoring Group was formed of three priests, representatives of three oblasts in Galicia: the Rev. Havryil Kostelnyk from the L'viv Oblast; Fr. Antonii Pelvetsky from the Stanislaviv Oblast (future Orthodox archbishop of the Stanislav-Kolomyia Diocese); and Fr. Mykhail Melnyk from the Drohobych Oblast (future Orthodox bishop of the Drohobych-Sambir Diocese). The motivations and understanding of reunification expressed by these formal promoters of the reunification and by West Ukrainian Christians themselves are largely overlooked in mainstream historiography's black-and-white presentation of state-church relations under communism. An examination of official statements, archival documents, and oral sources, and the application of a historical-anthropological approach, challenge the oversimplified view of those Greek Catholics who reunited as "opportunists," "apostates," and "collaborators." A study of the reunification from below reveals a local project of survival under conditions of antireligious and assimilatory policies within a communist state. After examining speeches and letters

of Fr. Havryil Kostelnyk, leader of the Sponsoring Group, as well as considerations of West Ukrainian Christians who did not accept the reunification, I maintain that the "refusal [by subordinate social groups] to accept the definition of the situation as seen from above" can be viewed as their resistance to official policies.⁴⁴

Havryil Kostelnyk was convinced that preserving an institutional framework was essential for the religious life of West Ukrainian Christians, and he elaborated in detail his vision of reunification during the L'viv Council. Appreciating the conservatism of popular religion and the place of tradition in church life, Kostelnyk stated that any changes in the daily life of reunited parishes and in Greek Catholic rituals and customs could only be implemented "very wisely and carefully in order not to alienate people from the Church and not to diminish their religious spirit."⁴⁵ He declared that reunited parishes, as a "West Ukrainian Church," were to remain distinct from the "All-Russian Church" of the Moscow Patriarchate.⁴⁶ Finally, Kostelnyk left no doubts that the reunited community was to preserve its national character by resisting Moscow's efforts at Russification. He finished his speech during the Council with the telling phrase: "We are the Ukrainians and we are in Ukraine. No one will deprive us and our Church of this."⁴⁷

Several considerations shaped Kostelnyk's conviction that the reunited community had to remain a distinct body within the Russian Orthodox Church. The national motivation (as expressed above) was foremost, but it was not exclusive. Kostelnyk also refused a complete dissolution of the reunited community because he was influenced by the image of the Russian Orthodox Church as a conservative, traditionalist Church, lagging far behind the needs of contemporary society. "The Orthodox Church is conservative and behind the times," he said, "It will be a mistake if we choose to follow those who are backward."⁴⁸ In his private conversations with the clergy, he even suggested that the reunited community had the potential to become a "teacher" for the Orthodox Church. "After my visits to Kyiv and Moscow, I have realized that [the Orthodox] are willing to become students of West Ukrainians as concerns many questions of religious life. [Our] Church in Western Ukraine has to become a teacher for [Orthodox] Eastern Ukraine."⁴⁹ In 1945 Kostelnyk confirmed this vision of reunification in his letter to Patriarch Alexei, stating that the reunited West Ukraini-

ans would “contribute to the transformation of the Orthodox Church into the most contemporary (modern) Church... that would best correspond to the spirit of our time.”⁵⁰

Still, the primary motivation behind Kostelnyk’s acceptance of reunification (a factor that brought him the approval of many West Ukrainians and raised the objections of Moscow authorities) was the aim to protect the Ukrainian national community. In his speech during the L’viv Council, Kostelnyk referred to a widespread fear that “our unity with the Russian Orthodox Church will result in the Russification of our West Ukrainian Church.” Simultaneously, he presented his own belief that the Russian Orthodox Church would respect the “national principles” and “national feelings” of the reunited flock.⁵¹ Directly challenging the reunification projects devised in Moscow, Kostelnyk claimed that there was no equivalence between “conversion to Orthodoxy” and “conversion to Russian Orthodoxy.” Furthermore, Kostelnyk saw the unification with Orthodoxy, required by the regime, as a step that had certain positive potential for the whole Ukrainian nation. He believed that joining the Orthodox Church allowed for the re-establishment of the religious unity of the Ukrainian people and ultimately the reestablishment of a Ukrainian national church. “When all the Ukrainians are united into one state, their churches have to be unified into one Church—their own Church.”⁵²

Such an ecclesiastical dream is indicative of Kostelnyk’s naiveté and complete failure to comprehend the contemporary context, the character of Soviet ecclesiastical-nationalities policy, and particularly the equivalence of “Orthodox,” “Russian,” and “Soviet” inherent in the official reunification concepts. It also points to the continuity of his ideas with the missionary vision of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, charismatic leader of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from 1901 until his death in 1944. The question of continuity or conformity between Sheptytsky’s and Kostelnyk’s concepts of a Ukrainian national church warrants a detailed examination.⁵³ For the purpose of this discussion, it is sufficient to mention that such a link was established by Kostelnyk, who claimed to follow and develop Sheptytsky’s ideas. He stated that “Sheptytsky dreamt about the reunification of the Orthodox Church with the Uniate Church under the Metropolitan in Kyiv. He only feared that Moscow would not allow the Metropolitan in Kyiv, which would lead to the Russification of

a [Ukrainian] Church."⁵⁴ More importantly, many West Ukrainian priests and believers recognized a continuity between Kostelnyk and Sheptytsky. The following extract is from my interview with Iaroslava Datsyshyna:

Mrs. Datsyshyna, did you know Rev. Kostelnyk?

Datsyshyna: Yes, a little bit.

And what compelled him to head the reunification action?

Datsyshyna: I think, an attempt to preserve something... His ideas were very similar to that of Cardinal Slipyi... He wanted to renew that all. He wanted to bring nearer these and those. Just as Metropolitan Sheptytsky wanted... He thought over this all the time and took different steps towards this. Everything has failed,... has failed... Kostelnyk was a good man.⁵⁵

Kostelnyk wanted to preserve traditional patterns of ritual performance and everyday church life in the reunited community. As Natalia Madei argues, the idea of the preservation of "our own West Ukrainian ritual," purged of "Roman (Catholic) innovations," returned to an indigenous Eastern or Byzantine rite, and untouched by Moscow's influences, testifies to the similarity in Sheptytsky's and Kostelnyk's thinking.⁵⁶ The retention of "our own ritual" was considered by both a crucial condition for the retention of the distinctiveness and national character of a Ukrainian Church. The claim that it is impossible to change ritual patterns and local traditions rapidly, forcibly, and completely is made in all official messages of the Sponsoring Group. Kostelnyk argued this to Patriarch Alexei: "Changes in ritual will occur over the following decades. During these decades, *our Galician Church* has to preserve its distinctiveness, let us say, *its autonomy within the Russian Orthodox Church*. The true reunification is not feasible otherwise... Orthodoxy [in Western Ukraine] has to retain its *specific appearance*."⁵⁷

An examination of Kostelnyk's concept of reunification prompts one to agree with Natalia Madei's contention that Kostelnyk understood the reunification solely as a change of subordination from Rome to Moscow, while preserving the "essence of the [Ukrainian Greek Catholic] Church."⁵⁸ Kostelnyk was forced to serve as an instrument of Moscow's policies in Western Ukraine; as such, he is depicted as a collaborator in the dominant collaboration-resistance discourse in the

field. My study suggests instead that his conscious objective in the reunification project was safeguarding the national and ecclesiastical distinctiveness of the West Ukrainian religious community, and therefore resisting Moscow's policies.

Whatever Kostelnyk's ecclesiastical vision was, the basic motivation of preserving the legal possibility to practice the faith in Western Ukraine impelled him and the Sponsoring Group to accept the regime's "offer" and become advocates for the reunification. This was the *raison d'être* of the reunited community. The alternative option, pursued by those Greek Catholic priests who refused to follow the Sponsoring Group, was to "preserve the faith... so that people know what it means to be a Greek Catholic."⁵⁹ The decision by clergy to "preserve the faith" meant a choice in favor of an illegal existence that could potentially deprive the flock of its pastors.

The dilemma faced by the West Ukrainian clergy illuminates the fundamental problem that the church under communism had to resolve: the choice between compromising with the regime in the hope that doing so would lead to institutional survival, and refusing to compromise, which would likely bring the repression of the church as a functioning institution.⁶⁰ The latter option turned those who pursued it into "martyrs of the faith." However, the path of martyrdom was not possible when the sacramental and pastoral care of a flock of millions was a necessity. As an Orthodox oppositional priest stated, only one thing was important for believers: "that in the closest church still existing, the divine service is carried out in its customary order."⁶¹

One idea the Sponsoring Group seldom voiced in public was that "there was no choice." Kostelnyk, however, often emphasized this understanding of the situation in his private talks with the clergy.⁶² Such an explanation of their move is also expressed in the memoirs of many reunited priests, adding evidence for claims about their "opportunism." Such accusations of opportunism are also abundant in official documents. Yet given the official concept of reunification, the regime was unsatisfied with priests signing the reunification pledge because "there was no choice" or to "save what could be saved." Because the state saw religious assimilation as the tool of sovietization, "insincere" conversion was considered a serious obstacle.

Reunification from Below II: Reaction of West Ukrainian Christians

After the formal liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, its faithful had to find ways to persist as a religious community within unfavorable ecclesiastical, national, and socio-political circumstances. "Believing without belonging" was not an option for members of a liturgical church coming from a Christian "civilization of the altar" as opposed to a "civilization of reading the Bible." Popular conservatism and habit also stood in the way of practicing the faith outside of a structured ecclesiastical community. Hence, only a minority chose the option of outright rejection of the reunification and living as catcomb believers. The majority of West Ukrainian Christians instead chose one of the realistic options: either to accept Moscow's reunification project, imposed by an atheist state and the Russian Church, or to support an alternative reunification project championed by Kostelnyk and those few Greek Catholic intellectuals who supported him. The fact that a small number of West Ukrainians did choose a third way, that of the underground church, can only be comprehended within James Scott's notions of calculated conformity and cautious resistance, and with regards to peculiar characteristics of popular religion, primarily the fact that its "historic strength... has resided in... non-compliance."⁶³ Examining the considerations of West Ukrainian Christians—particularly their identity construction—is difficult because they "are just members of the... church... who do not speak about their belief and their church in public."⁶⁴ However, thanks to oral testimony, it is possible to gain insights into a local project of survival. At the same time, it is difficult to explain the result of this project within the standard discourse of collaboration and resistance. These believers' choices brought the creation of a distinct religious community (that was, in a way, the realization of Kostelnyk's project) and prevented the assimilation of West Ukrainian Greek Catholics into the Orthodox Church.

A significant factor that undermined reunification and orthodoxization was West Ukrainians' negative image of the Russian Orthodox Church. West Ukrainians understood the Greek Catholic Church as their own, as a national church. This self-perception of Ukrainian

Greek Catholics falls within Sabrina Ramet's notion of "ecclesiastical nationalism," drawing from the assumption that a nation cannot survive without a national church. From this identification it follows that "the nation becomes infused with transcendent value and conversion becomes tantamount to assimilation."⁶⁵ In her study of Bulgaria, Daniela Kalkandjieva observes that ecclesiastical nationalism transforms the church from the Body of Christ into the body of the nation.⁶⁶ The words of a West Ukrainian priest convey this union of church and nation: "Never was our Church separated from the [Ukrainian] national state."⁶⁷ Owing to their notions of ecclesiastical nationalism, West Ukrainians could not view the Russian Orthodox Church as anything other than a Russian church, a willing agent of Moscow's Russification policy. West Ukrainians commonly referred to the "Muscovite Church" and associated "Russian" with "alien."⁶⁸ As another West Ukrainian priest observed of Moscow's ecclesiastical policy, "Stalin (similar to Peter the Great) imposed Orthodoxy... in order to establish Russian Orthodox control over our Ukraine."⁶⁹

According to West Ukrainian Greek Catholics, the Russian Orthodox Church was not simply an agent of Moscow's Russification policy. They saw the institution as a Bolshevik/state/bureaucratic (*kazionna*) church, subordinate to and controlled by the atheist regime (just as it had been previously to the autocratic regime). An Orthodox "Bolshevik" Church had "declined completely... It was evidently in the service of the state apparatus."⁷⁰ The Church's complete subordination to the regime was visibly manifested in its dependence on the Council's local representatives. One priest judged that "even Orthodox bishops could decide little. They had little power over the Church and their clergy. Everything depended on the officials for religious affairs."⁷¹ Because of the close association of the Russian Orthodox Church with the communist regime, West Ukrainians saw an inseparable link between "Orthodox" and "Soviet/communist." "Because they were Orthodox, they were all communists," one priest charged.⁷² Paradoxically, West Ukrainian Christians regarded orthodoxization in the same way as the Soviet authorities, as not only a tool of Russification but also a step towards the ultimate liquidation of institutional religion in Western Ukraine.⁷³ But the Moscow government's version of reunification was also rejected by West Ukrainians. Because of the Orthodox-Soviet linkage, the rejection of an Orthodox identity also assumed, in the view

of West Ukrainians and the regime, and arguably in the view of the official Church, the rejection of a Soviet identity.

Some West Ukrainians did choose the catacomb Greek Catholic Church. Those who pursued a catacomb existence resolved to preserve their religious-national identity by rejecting the imposed Orthodox and Soviet identities and thereby excluding themselves from socialist society and risking persecution for "anti-Soviet activities." The choice of the reunited community was different. While externally accepting Orthodox and Soviet identities, those Greek Catholics constructed a new identity or, to use David Thompson's notion, a "lived" identity,⁷⁴ which helped them preserve their religious and national distinctiveness. This identity was understood as standing against the imposed identities and drew on a clear "us-versus-them" opposition. "They" were "Orthodox," with all the meaning with which this concept was linked. "We" consisted of those priests who signed reunification pledges and their parishioners who continued to attend their *own* churches, even though these churches were suddenly declared "Orthodox." "People attended a church, because it was their own church. This is our church. We built it," recalled one woman.⁷⁵ Notions like "our," "our own," "true," and "Galician," and a strong communal spirit were essential to the identity of the reunited community.⁷⁶ Fr. Illia Ohurek recalled, "People stated, 'This is our native... our native church. We do not have anything else.'"⁷⁷ Inseparably linked to each other by this awareness of their distinctiveness from the Russian Orthodox Church and a common desire to survive Moscow's effort at unification, various members of the dissolved Greek Catholic Church from the laity, clergy, and episcopate, regardless of the sincerity and motives of their conversations, formed a "Church within the Church" in Western Ukraine.⁷⁸

The "Church within the Church" was a religious community closed to outsiders—Orthodox priests. It was a common understanding that only "our own" priests could serve in "our own" churches of the *reunited* flock and that only "our own" bishop was suitable to administer a diocese in Western Ukraine. "Those bishops who came from there [i.e., from the East], they were not trusted by our priests, and they did not trust our priests," remembered Iaroslava Datsyshyna.⁷⁹ A necessary condition for the reunification, advanced in deanery meetings before and after the 1946 dissolution of the Union, was the appointment of bishops from among the local clergy.

The existence of the reunited community within the hostile ecclesiastical and socio-political environment strengthened communal links among its various members: episcopate, clergy, and laity. These relations became less formal than they traditionally were in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. In response to the threat of Moscow's antireligious and assimilatory policies, the reunited community weakened the strict hierarchical subordination in the "Church within the Church," with the intention of reinforcing internal communal links and the community itself. The West Ukrainian episcopate came to realize that "we [i.e., bishops] do not simply lay certain demands upon our clergy, but simultaneously should meet their [and our flock's] requirements."⁸⁰

Local agents of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and the leaders of the Sponsoring Group correctly saw (although they drew opposite conclusions from this observation) a causal relationship between the preservation of local ritual practices and material manifestations of religious life and the community's potential to resist state policies. Popular inertia and habit—an important motivation in choices of West Ukrainian Christians—secured the ecclesiastical distinctiveness of the reunited community, even though it was formally part of the Russian Orthodox Church. Preservation of the traditional performance of rituals and celebration of feasts, retention of popular customs and traditional appearance of churches and priests ensured the separateness of reunited Greek Catholics. Already in 1946 a reunited priest concluded: "The eradication of Latin innovations that contradict the spirit and dogmas of the Orthodox Church cannot be our main task in the present moment. People are accustomed to the existing rituals. We have to be satisfied that they attend us [i.e., Orthodox churches] and should not attempt to change rituals, which would alienate believers from the [Orthodox] Church."⁸¹ With little modification, this realization was restated in many official messages of the Orthodox hierarchy and the exarch of Ukraine during the decades after the formal reunification.⁸²

The "Church within the Church" allowed for the persistence of institutional religion in Western Ukraine. It also allowed for the preservation of the distinct religious-national identity of West Ukrainians and local traditions of church life. Hence the choice of West Ukrainian Christians, which is commonly depicted as, and indeed was, a result of compromise and accommodation, ultimately became a way of resisting Moscow's antireligious and assimilatory policies.

Conclusion

The subject of this paper is the varied understandings of reunification held by those involved in the process of the formal liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. The objective behind Moscow's reunification project was to destroy the religious, national, and socio-political distinctiveness of the West Ukrainian population. Although the ambitions of Soviet and Russian Orthodox Church authorities in Western Ukraine coincided, the approaches of the two were different. Soviet authorities called for an accelerated reunification process, considering this as the inevitable first step in the transformation of West Ukrainian Christians into loyal Soviet subjects. The regime's pragmatism allowed it to use religion (Russian Orthodoxy) in the modernization project they started in Western Ukraine after World War II. In contrast, the Moscow Patriarchate opted for slower and partial changes in the religious practice of the reunited flock. An important reason for this strategy was the same appreciation that orthodoxization and sovietization were synonymous in the West Ukrainian setting. Emphasizing its "patriotic activities" in Western Ukraine, the Orthodox hierarchy attempted to preserve its usefulness in the eyes of the regime and thus secure the Russian Orthodox Church's position in the Soviet state at a time of renewed antireligious oppression in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The Moscow Patriarchate therefore approached reunification pragmatically as a means of resisting the regime's secularization project.

The principal objective behind the Ukrainian Greek Catholics' conversion to Orthodoxy was to secure the legal practice of their faith (an alternative option pursued by the catacomb church was to "preserve the faith") and, moreover, to secure their distinct religious-national community. This understanding of the reunification concept illustrates James C. Scott's point that false compliance is an effective tool of subordinate (oppressed) groups to undermine claims by dominant groups. If Danièle Hervieu-Léger's concept of religion as communal chain and religion as collective memory is applied,⁸³ it becomes evident that, on the fundamental level, the choice of those West Ukrainians to distinguish themselves as a "Church within the Church" did not differ substantially from those who entered the catacomb church. Both were local solutions aiming at and contributing to the preserva-

tion of ecclesiastical tradition and resisting forced secularization in Western Ukraine.

The research suggests the significance of issues of identity within the study of religion under communism. Different understandings of what it meant “to be Orthodox” and “to be Soviet” and the linkage between the two were behind the incompatible concepts of reunification examined in this paper. For the Russian Orthodox Church, the establishment of the Orthodox-Soviet linkage was a crucial element in its survival strategy. For the Soviet leadership, the recognition of the Orthodox-Soviet linkage was a realized necessity, a step approximating the assimilation of West Ukrainian Christians. For West Ukrainians, the recognition of the Orthodox-Soviet (-Russian) linkage meant the impossibility of genuine conversion to Orthodoxy and, respectively, of complete integration into Soviet society. An examination of this conception of the reunification held by West Ukrainian Christians offers a case study of everyday resistance in the communist state. Practical adaptability, cautious resistance, and the creation of a timely identity proved to be viable tactics for its subjects to resist state policies. Because the regime met with this routine resistance when implementing its policies in Western Ukraine, its reunification project ultimately failed.

NOTES

- 1 Cited in Volodymyr Serhiichuk, compiler, *Neskorena Tserkva: Podvyzhnytstvo hreko-katolykiv Ukrainy v borotbi za viru i derzhavu* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 2001), 109.
- 2 The message was published by the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchy* (JMP) 10 (1949): 8.
- 3 *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (GARF)*, F. 6991, O. 2, File 256, pp. 1–2. Reference to archival sources is given according to the established reference system in Ukraine and the Russian Federation: *Name of the archive*, F. (Fond–collection) No., O. (Opys or Opis–inventory) No., File No., p. No.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- 5 *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchych orhaniv vlady ta upravlinnia Ukrainy (TDAVO)*, F. 4648, O. 5, File 278, p. 129.
- 6 Anca Şincan, “From Bottom to Top and Back: On How to Build a Church in Communist Romania,” and Lucian Leustean, “Saints and Communists: The Orthodox Church and the Romanian Road to Commu-

- nism, 1953–1955" (papers presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 24, 2006).
- 7 *TDAVO*, F. 4648, O. 5, File 128, pp. 103b–103c.
- 8 Viktor Ielensky and O. Patalai, "...Partiia vse vypravliaie, pryznachaie i buduie za odnym pryntsyptom...", *Liudyna i svit* 3 (1992): 39–41; Volodymyr Pashchenko, *Hreko-katolyky v Ukraini: vid 40-kh rokiv XX stolittia do nashykh dniv* [The Greek Catholics in Ukraine: From the 1940s to the Present] (Poltava, 2002); Tatiana Chumachenko, *Gosudarstvo, Pravoslavnaia Tserkov, Veruiushchie: 1941–1961 g.g. (Seriia "Pervaia monografiia")* (Moscow: "ANRO-XX," 1999), 51–54; Mikhail Shkarovsky, *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov pri Staline i Khrushchiovie (Gosudarstvenno-tserkovnye otnosheniia v SSSR v 1939–1964 godakh)* (Moscow: Krutitskoe patriarshee podvorie; Obshchestvo lubitelei tserkovnoi istorii, 2000), 104–105; and Oleksandr Lysenko, *Tserkovne zhyttia v Ukraini, 1943–1946* (Kyiv: NAN Ukrainy, Instytut istorii Ukrainy, 1998), 285.
- 9 The term "reunification" is itself inaccurate, however, as the Eastern-rite Church in Ukraine had not been a part of the Moscow Patriarchate but of the Constantinople Patriarchate prior to its Union with Rome.
- 10 There was not a single registered community of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church prior to its legalization in 1989. In 1991 the number of the registered communities was 2,001, while in 2006 there were 3,438 communities, according to the official site of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (http://www.ugcc.org.ua/ukr/church_in_action/structure/). By comparison, before 1946 the number of registered churches of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was 3,431. In *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 2, File 256, p. 1.
- 11 In the words of Bociurkiw, the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has to be examined within the "Kremlin's church policy at the point where the latter converges with the regime's nationalities policy, one of the principal variables of Soviet ecclesiastical policy." Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, "The Uniate Church in the Soviet Ukraine: A Case Study in Soviet Church Policy," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 7, no. 1 (1965): 89–90.
- 12 Vasyl Markus, "The Suppressed Church: Ukrainian Catholics in the Soviet Union," in Richard T. De George and James P. Scanlan, eds., *Marxism and Religion in Eastern Europe: Papers Presented at the Banff International Slavic Conference, September 4–7, 1974* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1976), 119.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 Michael Bourdeaux, *Patriarch and Prophets: Persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church Today* (London: Macmillan, 1969), 15; Mikhail Shkarovsky, *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov pri Stalinie i Khrushchiovie*, 357; Tatiana Chumachenko, *Gosudarstvo, Pravoslavnaia Tserkov, Veruiushchiie*, 231–232; I.P. Merkatun, "Antyrelihiina kampaniia 50–60-kh rokiv na Ukraini," *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal* 1 (1991): 76.

- 15 Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, "Religion and Nationalism in the Contemporary Ukraine," in George W. Simmonds, ed., *Nationalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the Era of Brezhnev and Kosygin* (Detroit: The University of Detroit Press, 1977), 82.
- 16 Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton and Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1996), 101.
- 17 I provide a detailed discussion of the Soviet identity of the Russian Orthodox Church and the regime's attitude towards it in my article: Natalia Shlikhta, "'Greek Catholic'—'Orthodox'—'Soviet': A Symbiosis or a Conflict of Identities?" *Religion, State & Society* 32, no. 3 (September 2004): 261–267.
- 18 GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 222, p. 34.
- 19 *Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromadskykh obiednan Ukrainy (TDAHO)*, F. 1, O. 23, File 5096, p. 31.
- 20 Ibid., 2.
- 21 Ibid., 31.
- 22 *Arkhiv Istitutu Istorii Tserkvy, L'vivska Bohoslovska Akademiia (AIIT)*, *Interviu z otsem Mykoloiu Tsarykom* [An interview with Fr. Mykola Tsaryk], February 7, 1993, L'viv // P-1-1-315, pp. 14, 25; Ibid., *Interviu z iepyskopom Pavlom Vasylykom* [An interview with Bishop Pavlo Vasylyk], October 22, 1996, Kolomyia, Ivano-Frankivska Oblast // P-1-1-455, pp. 31–32; Volodymyr Serhiichuk, compiler, *Neskorena Tserkva*, 25. Reference to oral sources is given according to the reference system suggested by the AIIT.
- 23 GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 1442, p. 29 (the 1960 report, *O merakh po usileniu borby s ostatkami unii v Zapadnykh i Zakarpatskoi oblastiakh*). See also *Rossiiskiy gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii (RGANI)*, F. 5, O. 33, File 22, p. 98.
- 24 TDAHO, F. 1, O. 23, File 5667, p. 242.
- 25 Sabrina P. Ramet, "Phases in Communist Religious Policy," in *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East Central Europe and Russia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 11.
- 26 Tatiana Chumachenko, *Gosudarstvo, Pravoslavnaia Tserkov, Veruiushchie*, 25–26.
- 27 A valuable contribution is an examination of the role of the local representative of the Department for Religious Denominations in socialist Romania in Anca Șincan's paper.
- 28 GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 222, p. 3.
- 29 Ibid., File 1271, p. 154; Ibid., File 1054, pp. 210–211.
- 30 Ibid., File 1271, p. 154. See also Ibid., File 922, p. 216; Ibid., File 1054, p. 209; Ibid., File 222, p. 34.
- 31 Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 2.
- 32 GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 238, p. 238; Ibid., O. 2, File 549, p. 48; TDAHO, F. 1, O. 23, File 4555, p. 212–213.

- 33 Interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyna, March 22, 2002, Stryi, L'vivska Oblast, Ukraine, interviewer Natalia Shlikhta. See also *AIIT, Interviu z otsem Ivanom Kubaiem* [An interview with Fr. Ivan Kubai], April 10, 1993, the village of Zymna Voda, Pustomytskyi rayon, L'vivska Oblast // P-1-1-192, p. 19.
- 34 *TDARO*, F. 1, O. 24, File 1572, p. 43 (the 1952 report by the Ukrainian Republican Representative of the Council, Korchevoi). See also *Ibid.*, File 2741, pp. 304–305 (the 1953 report by Korchevoi).
- 35 *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 532, p. 45; *Ibid.*, File 222, p. 34; *Ibid.*, File 922, p. 217.
- 36 *Ibid.*, File 1442, p. 163.
- 37 Gerd Stricker, "Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov v soveskom gosudarstve. Ocherk otnoshenii mezhdu Tserkoviu i gosudarstvom," in *Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov v sovetskoe vremia (1917–1991). Materialy i dokumenty po istorii otnoshenii mezhdu gosudarstvom i tserkoviu*, vol. 1 (Moscow, Propilei, 1995), 46.
- 38 *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 2, File 126, pp. 46–47.
- 39 *TDARO*, F. 4648, O. 5, File 17, pp. 104–105.
- 40 *Ibid.*, File 69, p. 114 (Archbishop Filaret's message on the fiftieth anniversary of the Ukrainian Republic [December 12, 1967]).
- 41 *Ibid.*, File 278, pp. 128–129, 135, 142.
- 42 For further elaboration, see Natalia Shlikhta, "'Greek Catholic'—'Orthodox'—'Soviet': a Symbiosis or a Conflict of Identities?," 264–266.
- 43 *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 1442, p. 153; *Ibid.*, O. 2, File 255, pp. 3–4; *Ibid.*, File 80, p. 42; *Ibid.*, File 204, pp. 103, 107, 141; *Ibid.*, File 177, p. 19; Nikolai Tuchemsky (rev.), "V Volynskoi dukhovnoi seminarii," *JMP* 8 (1954): 62.
- 44 James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 240.
- 45 Havryil Kostelnik, "Pro motyvy vozziednannia Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy z Rosiiskoiu Pravoslavnoi Tserkvoiu," in *Vybrani tvory* (Kyiv: Vydannia Ekzarkha vsiiei Ukrainy Mytropolyta Kyivskoho i Halytskoho, 1987), 21.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 22.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 Cited in: Volodymyr Pashchenko, *Hreko-katolyky v Ukraini*, 89.
- 49 *TDARO*, F. 1, O. 24, File 3613, p. 27.
- 50 Volodymyr Serhiichuk, compiler, *Neskorena Tserkva*, 97.
- 51 Havryil Kostelnik, "Pro motyvy vozziednannia Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy z Rosiiskoiu Pravoslavnoi Tserkvoiu," 22.
- 52 Volodymyr Serhiichuk, compiler, *Neskorena Tserkva*, 62 (from the appeal of the Sponsoring Group of May 28, 1945). Italics are mine.
- 53 The issue is in the focus of Natalia Madei's study of Kostelnik's concept of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. For more details, consult Natalia Madei, *Kontseptsiiia Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy H. Kostelnika v konteksti istorii Unionskykh tserkov* (PhD dissertation abstract, L'viv Ivan Franko University, 2001); Natalia Madei, "Havryil Kostelnik

- i L'vivsky Sobor 1946 roku," *Visnyk L'vivskoho universytetu. Filosofski nauky*, no. 2 (L'viv: L'vivsky natsionalnyi universytet im. Ivana Franka, 2000).
- 54 *Rossiysky gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsialno-politicheskoi istorii (RGASPI)*, F. 17, O. 125, File 313, p. 21.
 - 55 Interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyna, March 22, 2002, interviewer Natalia Shlikhta. See also *RGANI*, F. 5, O. 33, File 126, p. 204.
 - 56 Natalia Madei, *Kontseptsiiia Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy H. Kostelnika*, 11–12.
 - 57 Cited in: Volodymyr Pashchenko, *Hreko-katolyky v Ukraini*, 93. Italics are mine.
 - 58 Natalia Madei, "Havryil Kostelnik i L'vivsky Sobor 1946 roku," 146.
 - 59 *AIIT, Interviu z Nataliieiu Stadnyk (sestroiu Neoniloiu, Zhromadzhennia Sester Presviatoi Rodyny)* [An interview with Nataliia Stadnyk (sister Neonila)], February 9, 1994, Chortkiv, Ternopilska Oblast // P-1-1-285, p. 28.
 - 60 Although approaching the persistence of institutional religion in Romania from quite a different angle, Anca Șincan discloses in her paper the same linkage between the Church's institutional survival and its readiness for certain compromises.
 - 61 Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917–1979*, trans. Sandra Smith (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1981), 5.
 - 62 *AIIT, Interviu z otsem Mykoloiu Markevychem* [An interview with Fr. Mykola Markevych], March 17, 1993, Mykolaiv // P-1-1-337, p. 9.
 - 63 James C. Scott, "Protest and Profanation: Agrarian Revolt and the Little Tradition," *Theory and Society* 4, no. 2 (summer 1977): 218.
 - 64 Árpád von Klimó, "Catholic Identity in Hungary and Italy between 1945 and 1970" (paper presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th- and 20th-century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 22, 2006).
 - 65 Pedro Ramet, "Autocephaly and National Identity in Church–State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction," in Pedro Ramet, ed., *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1988), 8.
 - 66 Daniela Kalkandjieva, "The Impact of Secularization on the Bulgarian Orthodox Church," (paper presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th- and 20th-century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 23, 2006).
 - 67 *AIIT, Interviu z otsem Petrom Dutchakom* [An interview with Fr. Petro Dutchak], May 20, 1994, the village of Lysets, Tysmenytsky rayon, Ivano-Frankivska Oblast // P-1-1-385, p. 25.
 - 68 *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 373, p. 7; *RGANI*, F. 5, O. 60, File 24, p. 155; *AIIT, Interviu z otsem Iosyfom Kladochnym (monakhom Ieremiiu)* [An interview with Fr. Iosyf Kladochnyi (monk Jeremiah)], May 27, 1993, L'viv // P-1-1-304, p. 29.

- 69 *AIIT*, *Interviu z vладыkoіu Sofronom Dmyterkom* [An interview with Bishop Sofron Dmyterko], November 6, 1997, L'viv // P-1-1-419, p. 22.
- 70 *Ibid.*, *Interviu z ієpyskopom Mykhailom Sabryhoіu* [An interview with Bishop Mykhailo Sabryha], March 30, 1994, Ternopil // P-1-1-321, p. 49; *Ibid.*, *Interviu z vладыkoіu Sofronom Dmyterkom* [An interview with Bishop Sofron Dmyterko], November 26, 1993, Ivano-Frankivsk // P-1-1-419, p. 5; *Ibid.*, *Interviu z otsem Ivanom Kubaіem*, p. 39.
- 71 *Ibid.*, *Interviu z vладыkoіu Sofronom Dmyterkom*, November 26, 1993, Ivano-Frankivsk, p. 5.
- 72 *Ibid.*, *Interviu z otsem Myronom Beskydom* [An interview with Fr. Myron Beskyd], June 5, 1996, Mukachevo, Zakarpatska Oblast // P-1-1-687, p. 6.
- 73 *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 222, p. 4; *TDAVO*, F. 4648, O. 1, File 436, p. 409.
- 74 David M. Thompson, "Earthen Vessels or God's Building? The Identity of United and Uniting Churches" (paper presented at the World Council of Churches' Sixth Consultation of United and Uniting Churches, Driebergen, Holland, 2002). I use the paper with the kind permission of the author.
- 75 *AIIT*, *Interviu z pani Liubomyroіu Venhrynovykh* [An interview with Ms. Liubomyra Venhrynovykh], November 5, 2001, L'viv // P-1-1-218, p. 56.
- 76 I discuss in detail the identity of West Ukrainians after the *reunification* in my article: Natalia Shlikhta, "'Greek Catholic'—'Orthodox'—'Soviet': A Symbiosis or a Conflict of Identities?," 267–269.
- 77 *AIIT*, *Interviu z otsem Illeіu Ohurkom* [An interview with Fr. Illia Ohurok], October 20, 1997, L'viv // P-1-1-739, p. 16.
- 78 For the original use of the term with regards to Ukrainian Greek Catholics after the liquidation of their Church, see Vasyl Markus, "The Suppressed Church," 122–123.
- 79 Interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyna, March 22, 2002, interviewer Natalia Shlikhta.
- 80 *GARF*, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 1442, p. 139.
- 81 *TDAHO*, F. 1, O. 24, File 783, p. 50.
- 82 See, for instance: *TDAVO*, F. 4648, O. 5, File 17, p. 90 (Archbishop Iosyf's [Savrash] report of April 9, 1966); *Ibid.*, File 393, p. 59 (Metropolitan Filaret [Denysenko] during the meeting of the West Ukrainian episcopate on February 20–21, 1974). See also Metropolitan Filaret's observation quoted in the Introduction.
- 83 For more details, see Danièle Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory*, trans. Simon Lee (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

From Bottom to the Top and Back

On How to Build a Church in Communist Romania

ANCA ȘINCAN

In 1987 the Italian journalist Francesco Strazzari journeyed throughout Eastern Europe investigating the life of the Christian church in its encounters with the communist state. In Romania, Strazzari managed briefly to interview Orthodox Patriarch Teoctist and Bishop Nicoale Mihăiță, the Church's specialist in ecumenism and chief liaison between the Church and the state's Ministry for Religious Denominations. Strazzari raised questions about religious life in Romania, particularly the demolition of church buildings in Bucharest in the process of urban redevelopment.¹ The answer he received was designed for an international audience increasingly concerned about the status of religious life in Romania. According to Bishop Mihăiță, "Urbanization always implied sacrifices. This happened even in Paris when they made the large boulevards. This has happened in Bucharest in the interwar period when a first attempt to modernize the city was made."²

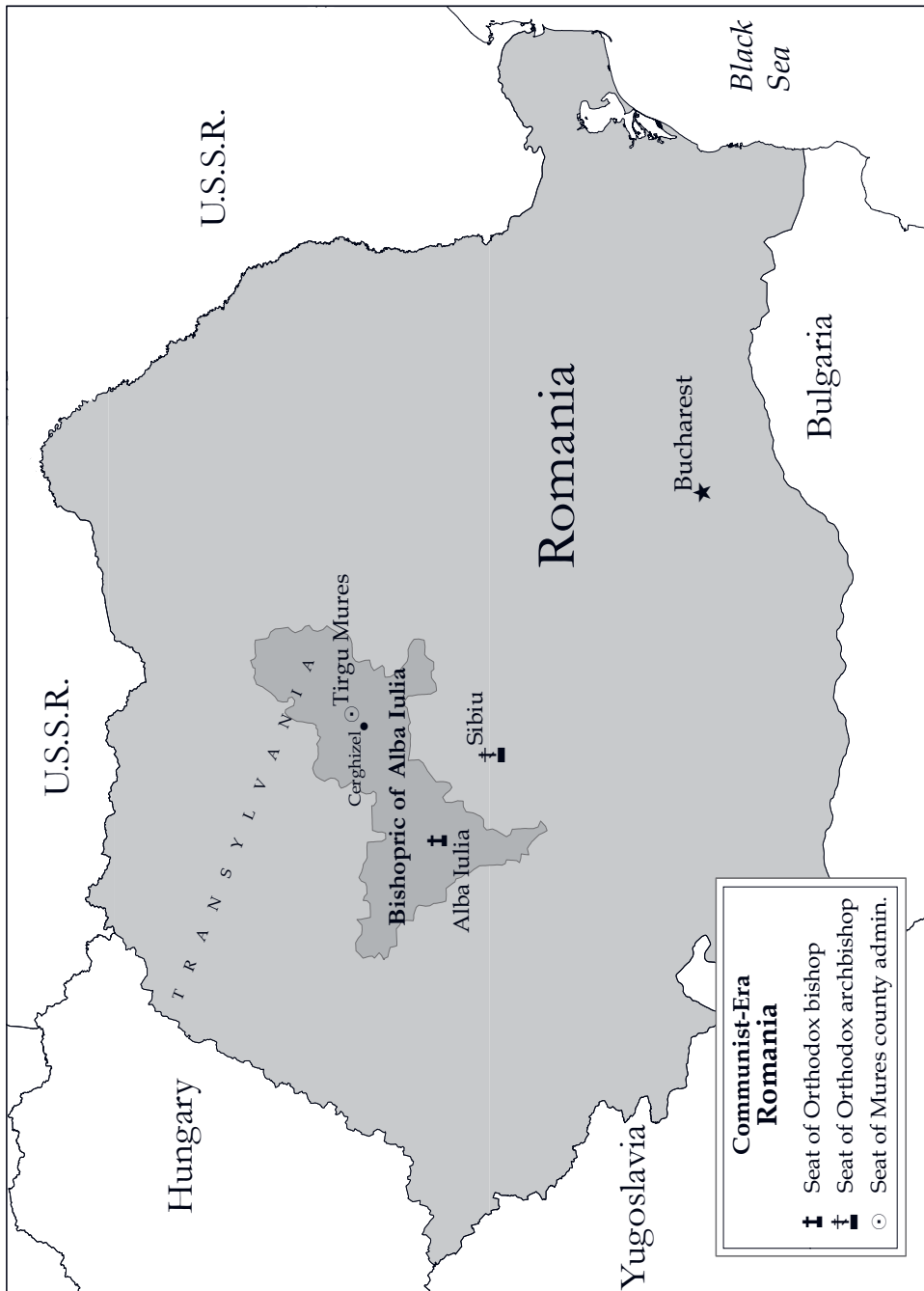
Church demolitions, destruction of villages, random and forced urbanization and industrialization—this is what the international audience knew about Romania in the 1980s. The West saw the communist government's behavior toward religious groups as particularly repressive, taking into account the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church, maltreatment³ of Neo-Protestant groups,⁴ and constraints and control over the Orthodox and traditional Protestant churches. These were the characteristics of religious life in Romania: imprisonments of priests and believers, the destruction of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox monastic life, and control over the religious schooling and the appointment of hierarchs and clergy. But this somber image of the relationship between the state and religious denominations in Romania was misleading, for the relationship was multi-faceted and changed with time.

Throughout the communist period, religious life continued. Places of worship were built, though not at the same rate as during the inter-war period; the training of priests continued; and several theologians of the period were educated in institutes abroad (Oxford, Geneva, Athens, Regensburg). Furthermore, continuing the tradition of the inter-war period, the state's building of national ideology during the 1960s took into consideration religious motifs and the pantheon of Romanian saints, and figures of Romanian church history made their way into the national canon. These gray areas in which the state allowed religion to function were disregarded in the Western anti-communist campaign, or were branded as evidence of the Orthodox Church's cooption.

This paper examines one of these gray areas by looking at the ways in which the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the communist regime was negotiated at a central level and renegotiated at the local level. In investigating the distinctions between these two levels of church-state relations, I am primarily interested in the distinct applications of central policy at the local level. In my research, I focus both on the Church as an institution and the local church as a community of believers.⁵

In the late 1970s and 1980s, at the same time that the state administration was razing churches in Bucharest in the process of urban redevelopment,⁶ the Romanian Orthodox Church opened over 250 construction sites in the newly created Alba Iulia bishopric. New churches were built and damaged ones refurbished; parish houses and deanery offices were constructed; and major works were carried out at the Grand Cathedral in Țirgu-Mureș and the seat of the bishopric. The bishopric of Alba Iulia, by far, saw the most frantic construction activity in the Romanian Orthodox Church at the time (see Table 8.1).

My research is structured on two questions: Why was this church-building activity possible, and how was it done? I have selected the Mureș deanery from the Alba Iulia bishopric as my case study. Within the Mureș deanery, I will focus on Cerghizel, a small village of 150 families (658 inhabitants), where, between 1977 and 1982, villagers built a new church next to an old wooden church dating from 1832. I selected this case study for both theoretical and methodological reasons. The successful construction of the church at Cerghizel lends itself to inquiry: How was this building possible? Did pressure from the community on local officials bring about a change in state policy? Was



Map 3.

Table 8.1. Construction of churches in Țirgu-Mureș Deanery (1975–1989)⁷

1. Church Historical Monuments

		Costs
Restoration on the same spot	5	284,800 <i>lei</i> [*]
Moved	5 (3 finished, 2 in project)	296,000 <i>lei</i>
Repairs	4 (3 finished, 1 in project)	497,600 <i>lei</i> ^{**}

^{*} A median salary was approximately 1000 *lei*.

^{**} One of the repaired churches was in Țirgu-Mureș.

2. Churches—non-historical monuments

		Costs
Rebuilt on the same spot	1	314,000 <i>lei</i>
Built on another place	4 (3 finished, 1 in project)	2,273,856 <i>lei</i>
Repairs	17	1,272,944 <i>lei</i>
Painted	11 (9 finished, 2 in process)	2,603,684 <i>lei</i> ^{***}

^{***} One of the churches in the process of being painted was the Orthodox Cathedral in Țirgu-Mureș.

it the result of local negotiation? Or was the construction of the church in this small village a tangible result of the alignment of the interests of higher authorities in the Church and state?

On Religious Life in Romania: An Overview

The church-state relationship in communist Romania was modeled after the practices of the Soviet Union. The same principles governed the relationship between the state and religious denominations in both cases; the same institutional structure administered the denominations, and the same ideology structured the relationship. Yet the situations of religious denominations in Romania and the Soviet Union had different outcomes. The survival of religious denominations in Romania

has been explained in terms of various deficiencies: the Communist Party in Romania was not strong, there was not a charismatic communist elite capable of implementing a ban on religious institutions, and the atheist dogma of the Party was unable to replace the religious worldview. Governed by this relatively weak party-state and unpopular ideology, the population—traditional, conservative, rural, and still centered on the church—prevented the new regime from banishing religious denominations.⁸ In contrast, other scholars explain the Romanian Orthodox Church's survival in terms of its tradition of submission to state authority, which justified its compromise with the communist government.⁹

I argue that the specific problems of the Romanian case came from applying the Stalinist model of church-state relations in a context where the Communist Party had only just begun to establish control over society. At the time of the 1943 compromise between the Soviet state and the Russian Orthodox Church, the communists were well established and the Church in Russia was nearly broken. In Romania, however, the newly established communist regime sought to establish this model of church-state relations at the same time as it was seeking to impose its control over a still-religious population. Thus, the party-state, insufficiently established as a dominant force in Romania, was forced to compromise.¹⁰

In this paradox lay the explanation for the situation of religious denominations in Romania. The initial two-way compromise regulated the relationship throughout the communist period, with various periods of harsher policy regarding religious denominations following Soviet directives or due to internal events that were followed by periods with more relaxed attitudes towards religious institutions.¹¹ The relationship between the state and institutional religion was far from straightforward. Religious liberties were not worth the paper they were written on, thousands of priests were sent to prison for their beliefs,¹² and denominations were persecuted and even banned. Yet at the same time, the majority of religious denominations (those legally recognized by the state) reached a compromise with the communist government, allowing them to maintain a status quo in the number of adherents, limit the demolition of churches, and temper state interference in religious practice. Religious life, though severely hampered, continued to function in Romania.

In the case of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the number of priests and churches remained constant throughout the period. Initial state assaults against the Church indeed brought a slight decline in number of clerical personnel. But already by 1948, at the time of the first round of negotiations between the newly elected patriarch and the communist administration, the number of priests was around 11,000, and the number of church buildings slightly higher. Both numbers reflected the addition of priests and buildings in the aftermath of the Orthodox Church's union with the Greek Catholic Church. During the entire communist period the numbers of Orthodox priests and church properties slowly, but consistently, increased. Given that state regulations stipulated that the number of priests correspond to the number of believers,¹³ the constant number of priests throughout the communist period reflects a constant number of church members. This formula was also applied to other legally recognized Christian denominations in the Romanian communist state: the Roman Catholic Church, the Hungarian Reformed and German Lutheran churches, and the various "Neo-Protestant" churches (the state's term for those denominations that did not emerge directly from the Reformation, such as Baptists, Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and Seventh Day Adventists). Most strikingly, between 1947 and 1989, these Neo-Protestant denominations tripled their numbers of believers and prayer houses,¹⁴ a trend that both the state and the traditional churches attributed to their proselytizing activities. But the success of the Neo-Protestant churches and the stable numbers of the Orthodox Church indicate that the state was unsuccessful in its own proselytizing activities, the selling of its atheist doctrine. Faced with this lack of success, the state resorted to legitimizing its rule by compromising with the institutional churches.

The Legislation

In theory, one could build a church in Romania—according to the legislation. But this required understanding and navigating the mechanism of state approval. Until 1958 any community that wanted to build a church or prayer house had to secure endorsement from the local and regional councils that issued construction licenses. As a result, negotiations for authorization were conducted with people in one's own com-

munity. Village mayors and Party secretaries, if not members of the community of believers themselves, always had family members in the church whom the priest or councilmen could approach with a request for a new building. Sometimes in these personal exchanges, only the verbal authorization of the local authority sufficed for the construction process to begin.¹⁵ This informal, decentralized process allowed for many church-building projects to go forward. By the late 1950s, the number of new religious buildings began worrying the authorities. The new constructions by the Neo-Protestant denominations, which had become legal in Romania just after World War II, disturbed many of the conservative officials in the communist administration. But even more troubling to them were projects of the Romanian Orthodox Church, which was rebuilding the churches destroyed in the war. A 1959 report of the Ministry for Religious Denominations indicated the need for government action to counter the frenzy of construction:

After World War II some religious denominations—especially the Romanian Orthodox Church—have tried to intensify religious life through a campaign of construction, reconstruction, and repair of churches. And the Neo-Protestant churches have shown special inclination to buying property for building prayer houses... Against these tendencies the Ministry for Religious Denominations, following the political directives of the Party, sought to prevent this campaign.¹⁶

Already in 1953 the Ministry for Religious Denominations mandated that, in their documents for construction projects, religious communities had to have the authorization of the Ministry, thus centralizing the decision-making process.¹⁷ This proved to be an unsuccessful initiative, for the Ministry was confronted with “an assault” of requests, submitted documents, and priests or believers coming for audiences. Consequently, the Ministry delegated its field cadres to take over the authorization of construction works. This decision created yet another barrier to communities seeking to build new churches or prayer houses.

The local cadre, or *împuțernicit*,¹⁸ of the Ministry for Religious Denominations was required to investigate each request for a new church building. The official was responsible for contacting local authorities to inquire about the necessity of the new building, instructing the community of believers on when to address their request to their hierarchy,

and directing the hierarch on when to present the request to the Ministry for Religious Denominations in Bucharest. The local official also prepared a file on each case and offered his own suggestions, on which the Ministry would ultimately base its decisions. In 1956 a change in the law required that the Ministry's cadre also inform the local first secretary of the Communist Party of each request and present the cases they had. By 1958 all requests had to be directed to the Ministry for Religious Denominations.¹⁹ The final decision was no longer taken by the local authorities but by the Ministry, making it more difficult, at least in theory, for any community to build a church or a prayer house. According to the statistical data collected by the Ministry, this did not terminate the church-building process (see Table 8.2). But this legislative initiative did give the Ministry direct control over the process and made it part of the negotiation process with the religious denominations. As a result, the system of bribes and bargaining became more complicated, as it now included local Ministry officials and Ministry inspectors from Bucharest as well. The change also moved the process from the local to the central arena. Whereas negotiations had been carried out only between a local priest or community and the local authority, after the changes in the law, negotiations for the building of a church were also conducted between hierarchs and Ministry personnel.

*Table 8.2. Requests for church-building projects submitted to the Ministry for Religious Denominations (1954–1960)*²⁰

No.	Year	Requests	Solutions		
			Favorable	Negative	In process
1.	1954	125	62	15	48
2.	1955	173	93	32	48
3.	1956	182	65	32	85
4.	1957	161	21	82	58
5.	1958	63	12	39	12
6.	1959	239	89	49	101
7.	1960	131	66	52	13
	Total	1,074	408	301	365

The Practice: The Why, the Who, and the How

To explain why construction projects received Ministry permission, two levels of state and church decision-making must be examined: the central and the local. The policies of both the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Romanian communist state were a result of central needs and local input, and the enforcement of these policies was localized and adapted to the needs of particular communities. To complicate things, Church policy was dependent on the demands and allowances of political authorities, and the state's solutions to national problems took the Church into consideration. The belief that the church-building process was partly due to pressure from below is verified by looking at the four sides involved in the process: the central authorities, the local authorities, the Church hierarchy, and the local religious community.

The Central Authorities

The 1958 law gave religious denominations permission to manage their religious buildings and to build churches, prayer houses, and parish houses. Religious denominations had varying interpretations of what the "ownership" of religious buildings entailed. For the Roman Catholic Church, the ownership rested on the Church's hierarchical administration. In the Romanian Orthodox Church, the ownership belonged to the community of believers, similar to the traditional Protestant and Neo-Protestant denominations. Thus, for the state, the problem of ownership was a difficult issue to discern, which led to further difficulty in devising a cohesive practice towards the construction process.

Ownership and local and central interests in the development of church property were not always easy to disentangle, and the various facets created problems for the local authorities. The state favored requests and projects coming from local communities. Conversely, they also responded to requests from a church hierarchy, because these offered the central authorities grounds for negotiation. For instance, authorization to construct a Catholic church was given as a reward for the good behavior of the priest or hierarch requesting the permit. This general tendency was common in the Ministry's dealings with all the

religious denominations. The constructions were often the state's way to reward or punish the clergy. This was also the reason why the local *împuțernicit* included, with an application forwarded to the Ministry, a characterization of the priest. But this practice of rewarding clergy with approval of construction requests also had a broader aim, as the government sought to solidify its authority in troublesome regions. Ministry documents show that more constructions were approved and a larger number of churches were built in areas that posed problems to the regime or in areas where the state administration had a direct interest.

In Mureș Deanery, two things likely influenced the state's authorization of construction projects: the integration of Greek Catholics into the Orthodox Church and the nationalities problem. The forceful dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church orchestrated by the state and the integration of the Greek Catholic believers into the Orthodox Church in 1948 created a number of problems for the communist administration.²¹ The incapacity of the Romanian Orthodox Church to absorb the massive number of believers, to deal with recalcitrant priests, and to convince the Greek Catholic hierarchy to join the Orthodox episcopate necessitated the communist authorities' involvement in the process. In turn, this involvement inclined the central and local authorities to give more leverage to the Romanian Orthodox Church's attempts at integrating Greek Catholic believers.

At the same time that the state was involved in the integration of Romanian Greek Catholics into the Orthodox Church, it was also pursuing policies that promoted the Romanian population over the Hungarians, Germans, and other nationalities. Not one interviewee gave a positive answer to the question of whether church construction was a vanguard for the nationalization process in Transylvania. Still, it was clear that the state relaxed its policy with regard to the Romanian Orthodox Church activities in Transylvania as part of a relaxed policy towards ethnic Romanians. David Gheorghe, *împuțernicit* of the Mureș region in late 1980s, recalled a meeting in Cluj-Napoca with all the department directors: "One of the directors, Munteanu, stood up and spoke about a recrudescence of the constructions of churches. I replied, 'We can see you are not Transylvanian. The Roman Catholic Church²² or the Germans have churches in town and in the center of the villages. The Romanian peasant is on top of the hill with his church.'"²³ Gheorghe laughed, and added, "Everybody applauded then."²⁴

David Gheorghe was the first Romanian *împuțernicit* of the Mureș region. Like Traian Hărșan, first secretary of the Communist Party in Mureș, he was part of a slowly increasing ethnic Romanian administration in counties previously dominated by Hungarians. Gradually, a Romanian-dominated administrative elite was formed in Transylvania, the result of a nationalization process that the Communist Party started in the late 1950s. Another aspect of this nationalist initiative was an increase of the Romanian population in areas of Transylvania with a Hungarian majority. When asked about the increase of Orthodox construction sites in the newly created Alba Iulia Bishopric in the 1980s, Burchard Arpad, the chief architect of the Mureș County during that period, replied, "The Romanian population was growing. The Orthodox believers, mostly situated in the villages, started to slowly penetrate the towns. The other religious denominations had a sufficient number of buildings, so there was no need for more buildings. In these cases they received authorizations for repairs." But when asked whether this process was related to a nationalist policy, Arpad said that it was a local process; all the authorizations were given locally and met with local political support.²⁵

The church-building process, though not likely an intentional part of the state's nationalization policy, did come about as a result of this policy. The Romanian Orthodox Church was not the only denomination that received state approval for projects. Authorizations were issued by local authorities for Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Neo-Protestant denominations. However, apart from the Neo-Protestant denominations that constructed new prayer houses, the other denominations received authorizations only for repair, rebuilding, and renovation, not for construction. As Burchard Arpad said, these denominations already had a sufficient number of religious buildings.

The *Împuțernicit*

The *împuțernicit* was the man in charge of religious life in his region, and as such, played a complex role. Record holder for all the religious denominations in the region, the *împuțernicit* had to supervise the activity of the religious communities. He mediated the church-state relationship, intervening not only in the problems between the state au-

thorities and the religious denominations, but also between denominations and even in the internal problems of a denomination. He was the first, and sometimes the last, state authority with whom priests had contact. He presided over the clergy. Based on his reports, a priest could be sanctioned, which could result in anything from imprisonment to deprivation of salary. Using his estimates and the statistical data he collected, the Ministry for Religious Denominations designed its policy towards institutional religion.

By law, the local *împuțernicit* was the state representative whose authorization mattered most in the process of building a church. The amended law of 1958 gave the *împuțernicit* important prerogatives, including on-site verification and reporting to the Ministry. In theory, the *împuțernicit*'s report was the main factor deciding whether or not a community would receive final authorization from the Ministry. Each report had to contain data on:

- whether the religious unit had another religious building in the village and what the condition of this other building was;
- the distance to the nearest prayer house/church of the same religious denomination;
- whether the religious needs of the community were cared for and how that was done;
- the number of believers who had petitioned for the new building;
- how the local authorities felt about the believers' attitude towards the regime;
- the financial means of the believers to begin construction on the new church (building space, materials, funds, workers, and so on);
- references from local authorities about the priests and believers who led the construction project; and
- the authorization of the local authorities.²⁶

By the 1980s the clergy and Church hierarchy realized the importance of these local officials. Before building a church, the first person whose consent had to be secured was the *împuțernicit*. I asked David Gheorghe, retired *împuțernicit* for Religious Denominations in the Mureș region in the 1980s, about his own motives for authorizing a project. He recalled that financial considerations were key to his decision: "I had a discussion with the mayor. I was looking if they had money, if he

needed the money for something other than building the church. All the construction projects in rural areas were done with the financial means of the village, regardless of whether it was the church or the house of culture. I asked about their other projects. If they had to build a house of culture or a school, I postponed my decision for the church until all the other projects were completed.”²⁷ According to Gheorghe, the *împuțernicit* himself decided if he wanted to support a project or not. This placed great importance on personal connections between the priest and the *împuțernicit*, or between the hierarch and the local official. Because he had veto power over any major project a religious community undertook, including building of places of worship, the *împuțernicit* typically engaged in negotiations with clergy members. Still, the community played an important role. In three interviews with the former *împuțernicit*, he mentioned only cases that had positive solutions or amusing circumstances. Nevertheless, the process of applying for authorization and the negotiation that ensued were not always successful and certainly not easy.

There were times when the Ministry delegate refused to authorize projects. In the interview, David Gheorghe discussed a village that proceeded with the building of a church even though he had denied authorization. The new church’s foundation had been laid around the old one. When he was notified, Gheorghe went to the village and asked the locals to stop the construction, yet they continued to build. He recalled the episode: “That year, the first of May was a Saturday, and everybody was celebrating it. During that Saturday and Sunday, the villagers raised most of the church from the foundation up. On Monday the priest came to me. He was scared. I immediately saw the problems this situation could create. I coached the priest to act shocked and tell the county first secretary that he had no idea of what the villagers wanted and that he could not stop them. The Party’s first secretary laughed and told the priest, ‘That’s what we deserve; we went for picnics and drinks while these people worked.’”²⁸

In most of these interviews, the former *împuțernicit* painted his role in bright colors. In Gheorghe’s retelling, he took center stage in all of the construction projects in the area where he worked. To verify his allegations, I have corroborated his stories with other interviewees, especially clergy and hierarchs in his area. The way in which the clergy, be they Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Protestant, still remember

Gheorghe two decades after his retirement, along with the number of authorizations he gave, suggest that the febrile construction undertaken by the religious communities in the Mureș region was the result of personal negotiations between the former official and the local priests and ministers. In their interviews, both David Gheorghe and architect Burchard Arpad argued that these local solutions were the norm. The particular cases that I researched were resolved via negotiations at the local level and seldom with the involvement of the central administration.

The Church Hierarchy

According to Romanian Orthodox Church policy in 1970s and 1980s, Transylvania was targeted as part of a process that documents call “completing the union.” The discourse of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the years immediately preceding the union with the Greek Catholics made no reference to a possible difference in identity between the communities belonging to the two churches. In fact, one of the arguments for unification was the common identity of their believers. Supported by an official discourse that linked Orthodoxy with Romanianness, the Transylvanian hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church neglected the problem of confessional identity when preparing the integration of Greek Catholics into the “mother” Church. They maintained that the differences between the two churches were negligible and focused the unification efforts on convincing Greek Catholic priests to join the Orthodox Church. But in the mid-1950s, the unification process had a major setback. A large number of Greek Catholic priests who had turned Orthodox in 1948 left the priesthood and took their parishioners with them. Some communities even resisted the unification with violence. Consequently, the Ministry for Religious Denominations began to intervene directly. Still, neither state administration nor Orthodox Church hierarchy considered a policy to integrate the Greek Catholic communities; instead, they restricted their activities only to the former Greek Catholic clergy.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the Orthodox Church admitted that its integration of the Greek Catholics had failed and redirected its activity toward the community, first through discourse but followed soon after

by more practical measures.²⁹ In 1969 the hierarchical administration of the Romanian Orthodox Church created a policy designed to encourage the missionary work of the Church against the Neo-Protestant denominations and the schismatic old Orthodox groups. This document explained the methods that the Church was considering to integrate the still reticent (former) Greek Catholic believers:

To eliminate the problems that still exist in integrating the former Greek Catholics into the mother church, we will take the following measures:

1. Clarification regarding the churches that still preserve unorthodox effigies;
2. Clarification regarding the preservation of unorthodox rituals with decisions for their elimination;
3. List of priorities regarding painting the churches according to the orthodox needs—using qualified painters;
4. Supplying the churches with the right priestly clothing, books and ritual objects;
5. Completing the clerical personnel with proper elements [*elemente apte*] able to consistently promote the practices and the orthodox specific ritual;
6. The personnel moves—appointments, transfers—will be arranged with necessary care permanently following the completion of the unification.³⁰

Although the Romanian Orthodox Church was an otherwise centralized institution during the communist period, the Metropolitan See and bishoprics in Transylvania had greater autonomy in carrying out these measures for integrating Greek Catholic believers. Special training schools were later designed for the clergy to take up parishes in Transylvania. Due to the composite religious and ethnic makeup of the region, as opposed to the more homogenous regions in the rest of the country, state authorities had closer encounters with local religious communities and local and regional religious leaders. Direct negotiations between the Church hierarchy and local authorities were frequent, and solutions to problems were localized.

The same was true of the Alba Iulia Bishopric in the late 1970s and 1980s. Though Alba Iulia was a newly created administrative unit

of the Romanian Orthodox Church, it was established on an important historical site of the Church and the Romanian population of Transylvania. Alba Iulia had been the See for the Orthodox Archbishopric in 1600 and had also hosted the Grand National Assembly that decided on the union of Transylvania with the old Romanian kingdom in 1918. Thus the new bishopric had spiritual and historical importance for the Romanian population of Transylvania.

In 1975 Alba Iulia became a bishopric administering Alba, Mureș, and Harghita counties. Almost immediately, the new bishop, Emilian Bordaș, designed a project for the “renewal of religious life in Romanian Orthodox communities.” The program was needed to confront several problems in the new bishopric: the proselytic activity of the Neo-Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church, the integration of former Greek Catholic believers, and the numerous vacancies of the Orthodox parishes caused by poverty in an area dominated by a Hungarian majority. Bishop Bordaș’s measures to address these issues included replacing old priests with new, younger ones who were well educated in the missionary activity of the Church, increasing the number of episcopal visits, and fully supporting construction activity. The bishop designed a financing plan that would support the construction projects in the bishopric. He also placed emphasis on publicity and advertised success stories throughout the bishopric, using diligent clergy as role models. These priests were rewarded; they moved up the hierarchical ladder and received better parishes and financial gains. Some were transferred to other parishes and other projects according to the needs of the bishopric.

Bordaș maintained excellent relations with the communist authorities. Even today, rumors of his collaboration with the communists roam around the Archbishopric of Alba Iulia. There are no archival materials available to support this claim, and none of the bishop’s former councilors was willing to talk about the bishop’s—or, for that matter, their own—relationship with the authorities. Suffice it to say that Bishop Emilian Bordaș was the only hierarch in the Romanian Orthodox Church who had to leave his post upon the request of clergy in his bishopric after the end of communist rule.³¹ Nevertheless, the results of his administration were impressive. In 1989 there were 206 construction sites throughout the bishopric. The financial effort totaled around 15 million *lei*, with works ranging from mortuary houses to new

churches. Almost completely disconnected from the central administration of the Church, the bishopric of Alba Iulia functioned as an autonomous administration and looked for local solutions to local problems and needs.

The Local Community: Cerghizel

What the villagers of Cerghizel remember of their adventures in raising a new church can be viewed as a representative case of how the mechanism for the construction of religious buildings worked in communist Romania. In the early 1970s the small village was moved from the valley of the Mureș River to a hilly area because of flooding. One hundred and fifty families moved, taking with them their old wooden church but not their priest. The former Greek Catholic priest who, together with the entire parish, had joined the Orthodox Church in 1948, had died of old age and was replaced by a recent graduate of the Sibiu Theological Institute, Father Ioan Tutecean.

The gradual replacement of former Greek Catholic priests in Transylvania with well-educated clergy was part of the Church's larger project of "completing the union." This project involved varied activities, from repainting churches with Byzantine iconography and changing the liturgical books to moving priests from former Greek Catholic parishes to established Orthodox parishes, sometimes across the country. Missionary work, involving well-trained clergy willing to accept the differences between Greek Catholics and Orthodox and at the same time complete the break with the past, was the principal means by which the Orthodox Church attempted to integrate the remaining Greek Catholic communities. Intelligent and astute students were selected, especially from the Theological Institute in Sibiu,³² to enter the hard missionary work in former Greek Catholic parishes. The central state administration approved of this project and supported the various attempts of the Romanian Orthodox Church to integrate former Greek Catholics. However, the new Orthodox priests sometimes encountered cold receptions from their parishioners and had to find ways to win local communities' trust. The Orthodox Church's policymakers, in following the broad policy of completing the union, allowed these priests to pursue local solutions to specific problems. Cerghizel was one case

where the priest, newly appointed by the Church hierarchy, joined a local community of former Greek Catholics in a common project: the building of a new church.

Father Tutecean has fond memories of the villagers.³³ There was no parish house when he arrived, so the young priest rented a house from the villagers for a year. They then contributed 100,000 *lei* for him to purchase his own house. It is not clear, however, why the villagers decided to build a new church. Today, the old wooden church still stands in the middle of the village next to the larger, stone church building. In an interview, the priest offered few reasons, the most important among them being that a bigger church was needed because the wooden one was too small to fit the congregation. Whatever the reason, the construction of the church became the work of the entire village: families contributed financially; hosted construction workers in their homes; and provided food for workers, for visiting hierarchs, and for religious festivities that marked phases of the building and consecration. For one such event, the villagers had to prepare food for 200 guests, among whom were the bishop, numerous priests, regional and local authorities, and the Cerghizel church councilmen. The project put tremendous financial pressure on the villagers. The total cost of the construction, according to the bishopric's estimates, was to be around 750,000 *lei*.³⁴ However, Father Tutecean remembered the final cost as being around 1,000,000 *lei*. The difference can be found in "protocol expenses." The priest was hesitant to state the obvious: part of the money went for various gifts offered as bribes.

The late 1970s and 1980s were years of severe economic restrictions in the Romanian communist state. Most of the villagers in Cerghizel were peasants working in state agricultural production enterprises, but some also held jobs in the factories of Țirgu-Mureș. Living conditions at the time—marked by food rations, electricity cuts,³⁵ gas coupons and rations, and driving restrictions—taught people to bend rules. Everyday life was a constant search for goods, and ordinary people queued for almost everything, including materials for building a church. Negotiations took place for obtaining construction materials, and officials received bribes for gas coupons, cement, and wire, as well as other authorizations for the project. Money was not the only currency for finalizing the construction works. People gave their time and labor, as well as animals to be sacrificed for the celebration feasts.³⁶

For instance, Father Tutecean described the impressive example of an old woman who gave the church 20,000 *lei* from her knitting work. She was mentioned on the wall of the church for her donation, and the bishop mentioned her in the religious service that celebrated the completed structure.

The first church councilman, Gligor Cojoc, was one of the key actors in the process of building the church. Together with the priest, he persuaded the regional authorities to authorize the building project. In Cerghizel's case, obtaining the permit took a long time. Father Tutecean recalled that the regional *împuternicit* (David Gheorghe's predecessor) asked why a new church was necessary, since the village already had one.³⁷ Expecting the regional representative of the Ministry of Religious Denominations to refuse the request, the priest decided to go straight to the higher authority, the Communist Party secretary for Mureș County. Tutecean explained, "We went every week, me and one of the church councilmen. I think he got tired of us and gave us the permit."

Several times in his interview, Father Tutecean mentioned Traian Hârșan, the first secretary of the Communist Party in Mureș county. Hârșan came to most of the celebrations connected with the construction, and according to the priest and the church council members, he played a major role in the whole process. David Gheorghe and Buchard Arpad, the county's chief architect, also mentioned Hârșan's role. His approval of Cerghizel's petition can be seen as a result of the government's nationalization policies in the region. Whereas the *împuternicit* who first denied the request for the church building was Hungarian, Hârșan was Romanian. He was among the first high-ranking Romanians in the Mureș county administration.

It seems that Hârșan's influence kept other state officials from intervening on a number of issues regarding construction of the church in Cerghizel. Since the project involved large sums of money, there were several contracts and numerous legal problems. Yet, according to Father Tutecean, the only state official to inquire about the progress of the five-year project was a police captain who mistakenly thought they had no authorization and came to investigate the situation. Instead, it was the bishopric of Alba Julia that devoted special attention to Cerghizel. Bishop Emilian Birdaș paid thirty visits to Cerghizel. A strong personality, he was always in command of the details of the

works in progress in his large and difficult bishopric. Father Tutecean's wife remembers:

Sometimes, on his way back from Reghin to Alba Iulia, he would wake us up in the middle of the night to show him the status of the works... When we finished the church, he asked me and my husband to swap parishes with a priest in Maramureș. That priest and his wife came to Cerghizel and we went to his parish. He wanted us to tell them how we built the church. It was winter, snow up to the knees. We went with our car up to a point and then we took a bus. The last part of the trip we went on foot. No one paid for the gas. That priest came to Cerghizel and spent a few days there. The bishop wanted to show him what a small village did on its own.³⁸

Advertised as a success story by the bishop, Cerghizel was also an incentive for the nearby village, which started construction work on its parish house soon after. Father Tutecean was granted an honorary distinction for his work. In 1988, after serving in Cerghizel, he became one of the five Orthodox priests given parishes in Țirgu-Mureș. Father Tutecean and his wife now live in a suburb of the town, where they have reconstructed the parish house.

From the interviews and available documents, we can clarify how the church-building process developed and what made this process possible. In answering the question of why communities such as Cerghizel were allowed to build churches, it must be remembered that the villagers had formerly been Greek Catholic. After 1948, the villagers became part of the Orthodox Church but kept their Greek Catholic priest, church building, iconography, and traditions, such as the use of the Latin variants for some ritual phrases.³⁹ Throughout Romania, the Orthodox Church took various measures in their attempts to integrate Greek Catholic believers. This was also state policy: the Ministry for Religious Denominations was directly involved in the integration process, as the communist state was the artisan of the two churches' unification. The Ministry endorsed the Orthodox Church's policies and intervened in the process by arresting reticent Greek Catholic hierarchs, priests, and believers who opposed the union. In the case of Cerghizel, the construction of the new church, three decades after the unification, can be considered a final step in the integration of the formerly

Greek Catholic villagers. Moreover, while the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church and the integration of its adherents into the Orthodox Church were marked by coercive measures, the history of this one village's church building suggests that, in some instances, the assimilation of Greek Catholics was successful. The reception and impact of an energetic new priest and the involvement of the entire village in the construction of the new church can be seen as evidence of a new—Orthodox—community. As Father Tutecean acknowledged, at the very end of his interview, he viewed the villagers' enthusiasm for the construction project as a sign that they saw themselves as Orthodox.⁴⁰ Indeed, none of the villagers rejoined the Greek Catholic Church after its revival in 1989.

Another factor in the successful building of a church in Cerghizel, and elsewhere in Romania, was the erosion of the communist system, especially at the local level. Members of the local religious community immediately perceived the "malfunctions" in the system and exploited these in the negotiation process with the local state administration. The Cerghizel villagers and their priest directed their request for a new church building directly to the regional Party authority (a Romanian), bypassing the local official of the Ministry for Religious Denominations (at that time, a Hungarian). Recognizing that in Transylvania in the 1970s and 1980s, a new, Romanian administration had arisen next to the Hungarian one, communities understood that negotiations could be redefined and made less complicated by direct appeals to ethnic Romanians in the local administration. For the villagers of Cerghizel, awareness of this malfunction in the system brought success, as it did for the Bishopric of Alba Iulia in general.

Lastly, one of the elements of the church-building process that became apparent during interviews was that the construction of a new church building belonged first and foremost to the community. In Cerghizel this was a project undertaken by a young cleric who needed something to put him in touch with his congregation. It was a local project with local solutions, built with the resources of the community. The community's motives cannot be measured fully according to the policies of state and church, and the results cannot be measured in statistics. Instead, a more appropriate measure is the community's sense of ownership over the structures they built—a church and parish house.

Conclusion

What did it take to build a church in 1980s Romania? A community of believers needed an energetic priest—charismatic, practical, with good managerial sense. And the community itself had to be united, with enough economic and spiritual resources to undertake such a long-term commitment. Added to these was a supportive hierarchical body (both the dean and the bishop) with excellent relationships with the state authorities. An open-minded mayor, a supportive regional *împuțernicit* of the Ministry for Religious Denominations, and an approachable Communist Party secretary were also important. But their support was ensured only if they judged that neither the community nor the priest would create potential problems for the regime. If a community fulfilled all these conditions, then, in theory, it was able to build a church.

Yet, in practice, this formula did not always function. The state only favored applications that fitted into its larger policy. For instance, it was easier for a Roman Catholic priest collaborating with the regime to receive authorization than it was for the minister of a traditional Protestant congregation who was also collaborating with the regime. The Department for Religious Denominations needed to win over Roman Catholics opposed the regime, whereas traditional Protestants caused few or no problems for the state. And, of course, it was easier for a Greek Catholic-turned-Orthodox community to receive authorization than it was for an established Orthodox community.

On the one hand, the process of church building required the religious denominations to internalize the rules and regulations of the communist state, to work within a system of legal checks on their activities. On the other hand, the Romanian state, weak and in constant need of self-legitimization, tried at the same time to play one actor against the other, controlling them for its own use and incorporating them into its policies. Theoretically, state authority was almost all-encompassing, but in practice it was eroded by the corruption of the system itself and by constant bargaining and negotiations. By being aware of these two sides of the communist state, its pretensions to power and its corrosion, communities of believers were able to navigate their way around the regime's restrictions—be they legal, administrative, or financial—and sustain religious life in Romania.

NOTES

- 1 The answer was strikingly similar—in some parts even identical—to the one given by Bishop Nicolae Mihăiță (Nifon Ploșteanul), currently Archbishop of Târgoviște, one of the most important advisors to the current Patriarch Teoctist, in an interview for France Press in 1988.
- 2 Nifon Ploșteanul, “Biserica și sistematizarea orașelor,” in *Biserica Românească* 13, no. 47 (January–March 1988): 30; and Francesco Strazzaru, *Tra Bosforo e Danubio chiese in fermento. Sulle orme di Cirillo e Metodio e della perestrojka* (Milan: Edizione Paoline, 1988), 34.
- 3 Especially after the Helsinki Accords in 1975, an increasing number of complaints about violations of human rights reached the West from Romania, many of them regarding Neo-Protestant believers and pastors.
- 4 I use the terminology by which these denominations were and still are known in Romania.
- 5 I would like to thank His Excellency Andrei, Archbishop of Alba Iulia, for his affability and willingness in helping with this research project. Additionally, I want to extend my thanks to the administrative councilor of Alba Iulia Archbishopric, Father Remus Onisor, for taking the time to review the archival materials with me and to locate the files that refer to the economic sector of the Bishopric administration. I express my gratitude to the archivist Elena Gheaja and Gheorghe Avram from the technical service of the Archbishopric for locating various files that were not processed in the archives but that proved central to my research.
- 6 According to the Report of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of Communist Dictatorship in Romania, where the demolition of churches in Bucharest received special attention, the activity of the party-state started in 1977 with the destruction of the Enei Church in Bucharest. In the 1980s this activity was systematic and had behind it a clear policy that was not specifically anti-religious, but rather stemmed from power positions in negotiations between the party-state and the central hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. See Cristian Vasile, Anca Șincan, Dorin Dobrinu, “Regimul comunist și cultele religioase,” in *Raportul Final al Comisiei prezidentiale pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din România* (Bucharest: 2006), 467.
- 7 Source: Episcopia Ortodoxă Română Alba Iulia, *Dare de seamă generală. Secția Economică* [General report. Economic Service]; Nearhivat (not processed in the archives), received from archivist Elena Gheaja and Gheorghe Avram from the technical service of the Archbishopric, Arhivele Arhiepiscopiei Ortodoxe Române, Alba Iulia, Romania.
- 8 See the arguments made by Stelian Tanase regarding the communist elite implementing the communist regime in Romania in *Elite și societate. Guvernarea Gheorghiu Dej 1948–1965* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1998).

- 9 Olivier Gillet, *Religion et Nationalisme. L'Ideologie de L'Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine sous le Regime Communiste* (Brussels: Editions de l'Universite de Bruxelles, 1997).
- 10 I have made this argument earlier in Anca Șincan, "Romania, The Exceptional Case? Mechanisms of State Control over Religious Denominations in the Late 1940s and Early 1950s," in Balazs Apor, Peter Apor, and Arfon Rees, eds., *New Perspectives in the Sovietization and Modernization of Central and Eastern Europe, 1945–1968* (Washington, DC: New Academia Publishers, 2008), 201–213.
- 11 Similar trends in the relationship between communist states and religious denominations/religion in East-Central Europe can be noted. The routinization of the relationship, the turn towards a specific national path of various state communisms, and various internal events all trigger changes in the relationship. See Pedro Ramet, *Cross and Commissar: The Politics of Religion in Eastern Europe and the USSR* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 1987.
- 12 It is difficult to assess the percentage of priests imprisoned because they confessed a particular religious belief. Many were imprisoned because of their allegiance to the interwar fascist movement (the Iron Guard).
- 13 Article 44 of the Status of the Romanian Orthodox Church approved by the Romanian state stated that the ratio should be one priest to a minimum of 400 believers in the rural parishes and one to a minimum of 500 in the urban parishes. See Departamentul Culte, Directia Studii, Referate, note aduse cu privire la consistorii disciplinare protopopești în cadrul Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, probleme de salarizare, Ianuarie 1953–iulie 1953, file 85, vol. 3, 1953, 1, Arhivele Secretariatului de Stat pentru Culte, Bucharest.
- 14 While in the late 1940s and early 1950s the number of Neo-Protestant believers for the four legally recognized Neo-Protestant churches was less than 50,000, the first census after 1989 put the number of Neo-Protestant believers in the hundreds of thousands.
- 15 David Gheorghe, interview by Anca Șincan, file recorder, Tîrgu-Mureș, February 15, 2006.
- 16 Departamentul Culte, Directia Studii, *Construcții de biserici*, file 102, vol. 1, 1959, 99, Arhivele Secretariatului de Stat pentru Culte, Bucharest.
- 17 Ibid., 83.
- 18 A comprehensive translation of the word *împuternicit* cannot be expressed in English using common state administration nomenclature. The word has similar connotations in Russian, where it was adopted in the Ministry for Religious Denomination nomenclature. The word literally means "one who is given power." The function was that of an inspector. For a lack of a better English substitute, I will use the word in the original language in the article.
- 19 Departamentul Culte, Directia Studii, *Construcții de biserici* (Construction of churches, evaluation) dosar 102, volum 1, 1959, 85.

- 20 Source: Departamentul Culte, Directia Studii, *Construcții de biserici* (Construction of Churches, Evaluation) dosar 102, volume 1, 1954, 94, Arhivele Secretariatului de Stat pentru Culte, Bucharest, Romania.
- 21 A pertinent look at the unification of the Greek Catholic Church with the Romanian Orthodox Church can be found in Cristian Vasile, *Între Vatican și Kremlin, Biserica Greco-Catolică în timpul regimului comunist* (Bucharest: Curtea Veche, 2003). A good summary of his findings is in Cristian Vasile, "The Suppression of the Romanian Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church," *East European Quarterly* (September 22, 2002).

The Greek Catholic Church in Transylvania has a rich history. It was created by the unification of a part of the Orthodox Church in Transylvania with the Roman Catholic Church. Its creation served the political purposes of the Austrian monarchy, as it was a counter to the Protestant majority of the Hungarians in Transylvania at the end of the seventeenth century. The Church eventually included a large part of the Romanian population in Transylvania. The Church was an important factor in the unification of the country in 1918 and was recognized in the interwar period, alongside the Orthodox Church, as a "national" church. The 1948 act of dissolution aimed at severing ties between the Romanian population and the Vatican, clarifying the religious makeup of the population, and suppressing opposition.
- 22 By referring to the Roman Catholics, he implied the Hungarian community.
- 23 In Transylvania during the eighteenth to late nineteenth centuries, Romanian Orthodox churches were made of wood and placed outside the center of the rural community and *extra muros* in the urban communities.
- 24 David Gheorghe, interview by Anca Șincan, file recorder, Tîrgu-Mureș, January 31, 2006.
- 25 Burhardt Arpad, interview by Anca Șincan, file recorder, Tîrgu-Mureș, January 30, 2006.
- 26 Departamentul Culte, Directia Studii, *Construcții de biserici*, dosar 102, volum 1, 1954, 84, Arhivele Secretariatului de Stat pentru Culte, Bucuresti.
- 27 David Gheorghe, interview by Anca Șincan, file recorder, Tîrgu-Mureș, February 15, 2006.
- 28 David Gheorghe, interview by Anca Șincan, file recorder, Tîrgu-Mureș, January 31, 2006.
- 29 This is the period of petitionary activity by Greek Catholics who requested that the communist government allow the existence of the Greek Catholic Church. See Vasile, "Suppression of the Romanian Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church."
- 30 Excerpt of Summary of the Holy Synod Meetings in 1977, the work meeting of December 10, 1977. "Minutes of the Synodal Commission Presided by His Excellency Archbishop Metropolitan Nicolae of Banat Regarding Measures on Preventing Neo-Protestant Proselyte Activities, Bringing

- back to the Church the Old Orthodox Schismatic Believers, Completing the Church Union in Transylvania and Banat,” Fond Sinod, Sumarul Sedintelor de Sinod din 1977, 146–147, Arhiva Secretariatului Patriarhiei Romane.
- 31 Bishop Emilian Bîrdaș was replaced by Andrei Andreicuț, his administrative vicar, in 1990. After a few months Bîrdaș was appointed Bishop Vicar of Caransebeș, a lower position in the hierarchy. He died two years later.
 - 32 A special seminary (a secondary school to train priests) was opened in Tirgoviste in the mid-1960s for training devoted to the particular characteristics of former Greek Catholic parishes. Although the school was supposed to provide clergy to the poorer rural parishes of Transylvania, graduates were used less in former Greek Catholic parishes. Instead, the Church hierarchy preferred that university-educated priests lead these parishes. These educated priests came from the Sibiu Theological Institute in Transylvania, which stressed subjects like church history, canon law, homiletics, and liturgics—issues that were particularly difficult after the unification with the Greek Catholic Church.
 - 33 Ioan Tutecean, interview by Anca Șincan, Mureșeni, Mureș, May 14, 2006.
 - 34 Episcopia Ortodoxă Română Alba Iulia, *Dare de seamă. Secția Economică* [Annual report. Economic Service]; File no. 4786, December 5, 1976, Arhivele Arhiepiscopiei Ortodoxe Române, Alba Iulia.
 - 35 Most of the country had electricity in the household for merely two hours a day.
 - 36 Ioan Tutecean, interview by Anca Șincan, Mureșeni, Mureș, May 14, 2006.
 - 37 Ibid.
 - 38 Maria Tutecean, interview by Anca Șincan, Mureșeni, Mureș, May 14, 2006.
 - 39 The use of “Spirit” versus “Duh” and “Îndură-Te Spre Noi” versus “Măluiește-ne” are considered the two most obvious differences in Greek Catholic and Orthodox religious services. This is obviously a gross overstatement.
 - 40 Ioan Tutecean, interview by Anca Șincan, Mureșeni, Mureș, May 14, 2006.

Human Rights as a Theological and Political Controversy among East German and Czech Protestants

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Undoubtedly, Christian churches, church-based groups, and individual believers were significant participants in the process of democratic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s. The Catholic Church's political impact on Poland has been likened to "seeds of triumph," while some observers have labeled the East German transition a "Protestant revolution."¹ The role of the church has been symbolized by pictures of, for instance, the candlelit Monday demonstrations in front of St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig, or thousands of Poles gathered for a papal mass. From such images we gain the conventional perspective of the Christian churches acting as guardians of freedom and human rights and taking the lead in the political changes of the 1980s. But when we make a historical analysis of the churches' part, it is, as Hugh McLeod has stated, "less clear how significant that part was."² Furthermore, looking back now, twenty years after the turning points of 1989–1990, it is also unclear to what extent the political influence of the churches and the Christian religion was effected directly, through activism and institutional means, or more obliquely, through cultural influences.

John Lewis Gaddis's well-known phrase "we now know,"³ which he applied to the political history of the Cold War and the communist states, applies equally to the history of Christianity in Eastern Europe. Since 1989 there have been many detailed national studies (including the recent, controversial studies of the churches' interactions with intelligence agencies) and some broader international and trans-national works concerning religion.⁴ Most of these, from the field of religious sociology, explore the decreased sway of religious heritage and church institutions and the extent to which communist rule was responsible

for this decline of Christianity's social and cultural influence in Eastern Europe. Other studies, mostly by political scientists and historians, were written from a traditional political-historical perspective and are therefore focused on the connections between church and national identity or church and state.⁵ A smaller number of studies by church historians describe and explain the survival of their own churches, sometimes seeking to legitimize the way that churches navigated amid opposition, conformity, and loyalty to the communist regimes.⁶

Considering the amount of literature published in the last two decades, the lack of cultural-history studies is still striking. The influence of churches as transmitted through the force of religious identity remains largely unexplored. Just as new historiographical approaches have recognized that feelings and emotions are historically influential,⁷ so a new understanding of religious groups should look not only at their social or political functions but also at their shared mentalities and associated phenomena.⁸ In recent German historiographic debates, the term "mentality" signifies the ideological and discursive structure of a particular group's culture and its associated emotional economy. Using this approach, this essay will explore one of the significant elements of Protestant discourse during the 1970s and 1980s: the issue of "human rights." Though Christians today generally endorse the concept of individual, human rights, Protestant elites in the former German Democratic Republic (hereafter GDR) found it problematic. Of course, this ambivalence was partly a product of the political antagonism of the Cold War, in which the "West" and "East" proclaimed competing ideas of rights: the liberal principle of individual, human rights and the socialist idea of collective, social rights. But at the same time, East German Protestants' concerns about the Western understanding of rights were also the result of historical aversion within German Protestant thought toward conceptions of human rights based in political liberalism or natural law.

The focus of this article is this particular cultural tradition—or "mentality"—of German Protestantism and the effect it had on Protestants' acceptance of modernity and modern political thought. This cultural imprint of German Protestantism did not change until the 1970s and 1980s, when involvement in ecumenical organizations, contact with non-German theologians, and the changing expectations of churchgoers in the GDR brought a transformation of East Ger-

man Protestants' perception of, and engagement with, human rights. By comparing this changing approach toward human rights to that of Protestants in Czechoslovakia, I will show that distinct discourses and corresponding structural mentalities regarding human rights existed among different Protestant Christian groups in Central Europe. Some political scientists, such as Gert-Joachim Glaeßner, deny that these differences in mentality exist. Rather, they have seen such variations as the positions of individual church leaders rather than the collective characteristics of a religious group. Contrary to this position, I will argue that, even though East German and Czech Protestants drew from the same theological references, their differing understandings of human rights as a concept valid for Christian ethics were grounded in distinct historical experiences and social and cultural settings.⁹

Human Rights in the German Protestant Tradition

Before we turn toward the concrete situation of Protestantism in East Germany and Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s, a short look at the historical ambivalence toward human rights in German Protestant theology is required. This is necessary because German Protestantism was, until the 1940s, still an important intellectual influence on other European Protestant churches, such as in the Czech Lands and Scandinavia.

In general, the modern idea of individual human rights that developed in Europe during the Enlightenment offered a liberal and secular perspective on man and society that the majority of the Christian churches could not integrate with their theological concepts. Long after the French Revolution, the Protestant attitude toward human rights was still represented by the prayer: "Freedom, egalitarianism and human rights keep from us, O my God."¹⁰ At first, "human rights" for Protestants was a synonym for chaos, anarchy, and anti-clericalism. Later, during the Industrial Revolution, human rights stood for radical promises and false hopes of solutions to social problems. But for most German Protestants, human rights were no substitute for charity and evangelism. As the German Protestant Central Committee for Social Welfare (*Innere Mission*) declared, "Human rights and human power are unable to create bread."¹¹

Beginning in the nineteenth century, German Protestants' skepticism about human rights heavily influenced both East and West European Protestants and continued to do so until the late 1970s. A well-known example of a German Protestant with wide influence across Europe is the Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Normally seen as an outstanding opponent of Nazism and advocate of moral courage and the dignity of man, Bonhoeffer was not an advocate of the liberal conception of human rights. In his 1941 essay "The Church and the New Order in Europe," Bonhoeffer postulated a contrast between the understanding of freedom in his theology and within Western liberalism:

Being free [in the biblical sense] means... not the dissolution of all authority but living within the authorities and bonds and *limited* by God's word. The question of individual freedoms—such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc.—can be addressed only within this overarching context. The important question is the extent to which these freedoms are necessary and suited for fostering and securing freedom to live according to the commands of God. That is, freedom is not in the first place an *individual* right but a *responsibility*; freedom is not in the first place oriented toward the individual but toward the neighbour.¹²

Human rights, he concluded, are a matter of charity, not of law. This theological and dogmatic argument remained unchanged in Bonhoeffer's influential *Ethics* (first published in 1949), in which he again refused the liberal concept of individual rights and argued for a theological determination of all existence:¹³ "Therefore the church, too, has no relationship to the world other than through Jesus Christ. This means that the proper relationship of the church to the world does not derive from some natural law, or law of reason, or universal human rights, but *solely* from the gospel of Jesus Christ."¹⁴

Bonhoeffer's approach was typical of German Protestant theology in the early twentieth century, while the positive attitude toward liberal human rights expressed by figures like Ernst Troeltsch was the exception. Even after defeat in war, occupation and division, and Germans' encounter with ideas of democracy and socialism, Protestant theologians continued to hold to the traditional, critical approach to human

rights. For example, theologian Friedrich Delektat, speaking in January 1949 at the synod of the Lutheran Church, pointed to the conflict between abstract ideas and Germans' concrete problems: "If, instead of universal human rights, the introduction of the new constitutions in Germany promised every German his own bed for the year 1949 and every German family its own kitchen and own flat for the year 1950, and also if this promise should be kept, then so would the trust of the German population in the law and justice of the new state be strengthened much more than through those many newspaper articles about universal human rights, which are not possible to realize in practice today."¹⁵

Traces of this opinion can also be found in the periodical of the Confessing Church, *Junge Kirche*, first published as an anti-Nazi forum. In 1949 *Junge Kirche* characterized human rights as a "titanic attempt," arguing that there was no reference to God in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹⁶ That same year Protestant jurists and theologians from West Germany, meeting in Göttingen, broached the issue of natural law and human rights as an acceptable basis of law. They agreed that different "secularized forms" of natural law could not be the last normative instance for human rights.¹⁷

These examples indicate the continued ambivalence among Protestants in Germany toward the idea of human rights. Ironically, the very concept of individual rights owed much to German Protestantism. Luther, the Reformation, and Protestant theology had offered a new understanding of humanity based on individualism and personal responsibility, which allowed for the development of the modern liberal model of human rights. At the same time, however, German Protestant theology also assumed that all people should be Protestant Christians; therefore, a definition of, or argument for, human rights was not necessary. This line of argument could be described as the "idealistic" or "anti-natural law" approach, variations of which can be found among different traditions of European Protestantism. In the twentieth century, its leading advocate, along with Bonhoeffer, was the Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Like Bonhoeffer, Barth held to the notion of responsibility rather than rights. He argued that Christians, while ultimately committed to God's kingdom, are also "equally committed to responsibility for the earthly 'city,' called to work and (it may be) to struggle, as well as to pray, for it."¹⁸ Barth wrote of these political duties as be-

ing carried out collectively, by the Christian church, not by individuals. He insisted upon the rights of the church to proclaim the Gospel and administer the sacraments, a liberty that was grounded not in ideas derived from liberalism or natural law but rather in the “concrete law of freedom.” For Barth, the rights of the church, not of individuals, were fundamental to a just state. He wrote, “This right of the Church to liberty means the foundation, the maintenance, the restoration of everything—certainly of all human law. Wherever this right is recognized, and wherever a true Church makes use of it... there we shall find a legitimate human authority and an equally legitimate human independence.”¹⁹

Even as we recognize this important and influential German view of human rights, it should also be mentioned that other Protestant perspectives of human rights existed. For example, American Protestants such as Frederick Nolde, John Foster Dulles, and Reinhold Niebuhr had a strong impact on the formulation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Likewise, the foundation of the World Council of Churches in 1948 was shaped by the work of Dutch General Secretary Willem Visser’t Hooft and his understanding of religious freedom as a fundamental human right.²⁰

Political and Church-Based Developments in the 1970s

Emerging from this theological and church-historical background, the discourse about Christianity and human rights that started in the 1970s ran counter to the German Protestant theological tradition. In this respect German Protestantism was behind the Roman Catholic Church (and definitely behind Catholic thinkers like Jacques Maritain). After controversial debates during the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the Catholic Church had officially accepted human rights based on natural law, with the statement on religious liberty, “*Dignitatis Humanae*” (1965).²¹ This declaration and, more influentially, the social and political movements of the 1960s widened the horizon of the somewhat isolated German Protestant churches and opened a theological discussion of human rights. However, the most important motivation to address human rights came from the East-

West conflict. The Cold War in Europe had changed by the 1970s; no longer enemies seeking to extend the territory under their control, the two superpowers now tried to consolidate their hegemony within existing boundaries. The United States and the Soviet Union wanted to maintain geopolitical stability in Europe with as few military, political, economic, and ideological costs as possible. Under this new geopolitical order, the successful *Ostpolitik* of West German chancellor Willy Brandt and the acceptance of two separate German states at the United Nations in 1973 set the scene for the multilateral European Security Conference. This diplomatic gathering of 35 European states, Canada, and the United States, later known as the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), ended in 1975 with the unanimous approval of the Helsinki Accords. The articles and “baskets” of the Helsinki Accords were strongly marked by the two different approaches to the issue of rights: that of the Western democracies, which promoted the liberal idea of individual rights, and that of the Eastern socialist states, which advocated social and collective human rights. Most influential for ongoing developments in Eastern Europe, however, was Article VII of the Accords, which required signatory states to respect human rights and religious liberty. This particular agreement on respect of human rights was derived from natural-law principles and was an accomplishment of the Vatican and its diplomatic representatives.²²

The political impact of the Helsinki Accords provoked a response from European Protestant churches and ecumenical organizations. The two main German Protestant institutions, the West German *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* (EKD) and the *Bund Evangelischer Kirchen* in East Germany (BEK), had to respond not only to the political but also to the ecclesiastical and ecumenical demands of the situation. The result was a debate about human rights that departed from the previous theological *Deutsche Sonderweg*.

In 1974 the EKD published for the first time a statement about human rights, followed by, in 1975 and 1976, two other official positions on human rights in the European ecumenical context. These declarations generated intense dispute about human rights at different levels within the Church in West Germany.²³ Only then did the Church's statements symbolize a turn toward secular language and Enlightenment concepts. However, because they sought to ground human rights not in natural law but in Protestant theology, they also tried—in the

tradition of Bonhoeffer—to avoid highlighting individual human rights. West German Church leaders and theologians instead pointed out the moral and social obligation of Protestants toward their brothers and sisters in society.

Very similar to these discussions among West German Protestants were those that began during the 1970s in the churches in the GDR, although they took place in the very different context of censorship, state pressure, and repression of individual believers in daily life. In 1973 the Theological Department of the Lutheran Committee in the GDR presented the study *Sorge um eine menschliche Welt—Normativität und Relativität der Menschenrechte* [Care for a human world: Normativity and relativity of Human Rights], in which its authors tried to develop a differentiated Christian viewpoint of human rights in a socialist society. The study presented an understanding of human rights that was both close to the socialist interpretation of collective rights and critical of the socialist state's abuses of individual rights: "Human rights and socialism have become influential examples for a better life, and their mobilizing power still works unchanged today... If the rights of others becomes the main priority of society, then the limitations for an increase in humanity that arise from the socialist approach also become visible."²⁴ This attempt at a balanced perspective was not well received. The East German government, in the person of State Secretary for Church Affairs Hans Seigewasser, denounced the study as "addressed against the internal and foreign affairs of the GDR." The authors were prohibited from releasing the study abroad or publishing it at home, and they were threatened with state sanctions.

This episode indicates East German Protestants' limited scope of activity in the early 1970s. But with the GDR's entrance into the United Nations in 1973 and the state's new international profile, the situation of the Protestant Church changed. The state now tried to use the Church to promote the foreign policy of the GDR in ecumenical discussions; Protestant representatives were expected to stress the positive role of the socialist countries in the CSCE process and, at the same time, abandon liberal concepts of human rights. The Church thus had to adjust for the new ideas encountered in ecumenical meetings and avoid being dominated by state instrumentalization. The issue of human rights was therefore a battleground for both sides. The Church was impelled to develop a response to the Helsinki Accords out of a

theological tradition that was skeptical of individual human rights in a liberal and democratic sense. At the same time, the state sought a policy that would safely accommodate the Church's widened horizons, insofar as it advanced the GDR's international aims, while limiting the influence of the East German Protestants' encounter with ideas of human rights.

Leading Protestant theologians and influential representatives of the BEK in ecumenical organizations, like Christa Lewek, Manfred Stolpe, and Günter Krusche, formulated an answer to this dilemma. They argued that the question of human rights was anchored in the social-political reality of the GDR and could be realized only under the conditions of socialism. Furthermore, they stated that individual and social human rights belonged together and were interdependent. Thus, the Synod stated, "Helsinki showed us: One cannot talk about peace without mentioning human rights. One can't want human rights for the individual without standing up for peace for all."²⁵ However, these prominent figures of the BEK were not representative of East German Protestants. With such abstract statements, the theologians and Church officials showed their closeness to the ideology of the regime. In addition, they were part of a privileged Protestant elite who worked in and for the *Bund Evangelischer Kirchen* and were isolated from ordinary Protestant believers. While this elite enjoyed, for example, the freedom to travel abroad (including to Western countries) and the opportunity to publish their theological writings on the "church in socialism," those who attended Sunday services suffered daily discrimination, and their children were barred from higher education. While the leading figures of the BEK did not see the necessity for political change and opposition by the churches, younger, more radical Protestants were restless for freedom of movement, employment, and conscience. Although their numbers were not large (about 4,000–6,000 younger Protestants belonged to the circle of these oppositional groups, in contrast to four or five million official members of the BEK), the oppositional churchgoers began at the end of the 1980s to influence ordinary churchgoers through their political engagement, their dynamic actions, and their demands for democracy and human rights in the GDR.²⁶ It was these believers, not the Church leaders and theologians, who drove the demonstrations of 1989.

Human Rights and Protestant Grassroots Groups in the 1980s

Despite the GDR's greater openness in the 1970s, tension filled the 1980s. Rising economic problems and the aging political elite's vice-like grip on power contributed to a collective gloom among East Germans. Perestroika and glasnost in the Soviet Union offered the hope of change, but the East German regime's continued inflexibility only further demoralized the general public. State policy against churches also grew more restrictive, while the BEK leadership sought to dampen any enthusiasm for Gorbachev's reforms, warning members against glasnost euphoria. Church leaders did not want what they believed to be risky, open discussions in groups and broader circles to jeopardize an improvement in church-state relations.²⁷ This reluctant response to the human-rights issue matched that of the top level of the BEK. By the late 1980s East German Protestant leaders continued to prefer dialogue with the state and maintenance of the status quo over the potential danger of discussions about freedom and human rights.

Gorbachev's "New Thinking" was therefore more appreciated by unofficial church-based groups and in circles of the independent peace movement, like the *Bausoldaten* discussed in David Doellinger's essay. Christians—mostly Protestants—in these groups expected new possibilities for participation in civil society and took the opportunity to express explicitly the social and political shortcomings of the GDR and to call for a critical and thorough debate about the political system.²⁸ The insistence by these Protestants, who organized groups at the grassroots level (*Basisgruppen*), on human rights for individuals in the socialist state was a radical departure from the discourse of Church leaders as well as from the traditions of German Protestant theology. Therefore, owing to this conflict with the views of the BEK leadership and the main current of German Protestant thought, Christian activists did not formulate their arguments against the repressive political situation in the GDR using theological concepts but instead turned to secular language.

One important episode that made clear this gap between the *Bund Evangelischer Kirchen* as an institution and ordinary Protestants involved the Conciliar Process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of

Creation, initiated by the World Council of Churches at its 1983 Assembly in Vancouver. The Conciliar Process stimulated East German Protestants to express their dissent publicly for the first time and protest the absence of liberal freedoms and opportunities to participate in public discourse. In advance of three major ecumenical gatherings in Dresden and Magdeburg in 1986, a group of Protestants and Catholics started a “postcard campaign,” inviting all Christians in the GDR to write their hopes and expectations for the meetings and the Conciliar Process. The campaign was a surprising success. By the start of 1987, almost 10,000 replies had been received from bakers, gardeners, kindergarten teachers, and other ordinary East Germans, who wrote clearly and impressively about their individual experiences in a socialist society.²⁹ From a historical perspective, this collection of requests and proposals—today lying in the archives of the Protestant Church in Berlin—represents an exceptional source of “history from below.”³⁰ These postcards tell of the political deficiencies of the socialist state and give insight into the restricted, depressing, and gray daily life of the GDR in the late 1980s. Nearly all respondents, writing under the heading “Glasnost in the GDR,” cited the major need in East German state and society for new political and economic structures. Besides other political and legal issues, such as the non-existent rule of law, an obvious theme in the postcards was the demand for civil and human rights on all levels, as well as the often expressed and deeply felt regret at struggling through daily life without hope or joy. For many respondents, the act of writing itself offered personal encouragement, connected with the hope that the church would become their advocate against the sorrows and hardships of their lives.

Although the postcard campaign was done under religious auspices, and the postcards were written mostly by Catholics and Protestants, the answers were not explicitly religious or theological. Respondents used secular language to express what they missed and did not connect their thoughts to any theological concept—neither to the statements of the *Bund Evangelischer Kirchen* nor the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*. Comments written under the heading “Hopes for Words and Actions from the Church” mentioned notable contemporary figures as examples of Christian action, such as the German theologians Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Hans-Joachim Iwand, black South African pastor Frank Chikane, and Martin Luther King, Jr., or used biblical

references, mostly from the Sermon on the Mount, to legitimize the political engagement of the church. The only specific reference to German theological discourse was to the concept of *Shalom* formulated by Heino Falcke, a supporter of the grassroots Protestant groups. This absence of comment on statements of the BEK not only indicated that the Church's discourse on human rights remained abstract and elitist for most Protestants but also demonstrated that the gap between Church leaders and churchgoers in the GDR was almost as wide as that between the Politburo and the people. Ordinary Protestants, especially those of younger generations who belonged to the grassroots groups, distanced themselves increasingly from the institutional Church. No longer could the Lutheran Church in East Germany be seen as a *Volkskirche*.

At the same time, as Protestant opponents of the government became estranged from the institutional Church, the Protestant opposition became less and less a Christian movement. Because Church functionaries, in pursuing the idea of the "church in socialism" and following the tradition of German theology, did not offer a Christian argument for human rights, Protestants involved in grassroots opposition groups turned to a secularized discourse. The opposition set itself against the leadership of the East German Protestant Church, and laypeople became active in non-religious dissident groups. Similarly, when the Monday Demonstrations began at Leipzig's St. Nicholas Church in 1989, non-Christians had no confessional obstacles to joining with Christians in the protests against the state.

Despite the emerging divisions in the Church, East German Protestants attempted during the 1986 ecumenical gatherings to integrate liberal ideas of human rights into a theological framework. One of the working groups formed during the meetings, representing the whole spectrum of East German Protestantism (pastors, BEK functionaries, grassroots group members, and laypeople), worked to produce a statement on believers' political and social tasks in light of the Christian virtue of hope for the present and future. The final text of this working group, titled "More Justice in the GDR," became—more than any other document of this time—a symbol of the resistance of the church to the state in the last years of the GDR. It emboldened many East German Christians and encouraged them to join in the demonstrations of 1989, therefore becoming a significant element in the collective mem-

ory of the Protestant participants. Under the heading "Our Hope and Our Act," the document declared: "We Christians pray: 'Your kingdom come,' because we expect from God that which we cannot expect from man. We expect that God will one day wipe away all our tears. We expect his kingdom, in which all suffering and all injustice will have their end. Man cannot and need not build this kingdom. God's kingdom is God's concern... Therefore, we believe that already now and through our humble work, refreshing and encouraging signs of God's kingdom and his justice in our world are possible. Because God in Christ is close to all men, we seek every coalition of reason to advance toward a more humane world, in which peace and justice grow and the oppressed can again walk upright."³¹

Though the statement was influential to Protestants in their opposition to the state, its pious language concealed a very controversial debate. The working group's final text was a compromise in this debate, but the arguments showed that the German Protestant theological tradition remained a difficult legacy. The crucial points of the disagreement were the theological and ecclesiastical issues related to how Protestants, living in a real social and political context, understand and seek the "Kingdom of God." The working group, in its deliberations, addressed two major theological questions. First, when and how is the Kingdom of God coming—and what consequences will this have for the ongoing efforts of Protestants to change the social and political reality of the GDR? And second, in the context of the GDR, what priority should be given to the politics and ideology of socialism as opposed to the struggle for democracy and the rule of law? Were these lines of political activity connected to or exclusive of each other? And what was the relationship between opposition and authority in general?

Historically, the differing approaches to these questions were crystallized in two wings of German political Protestantism. One approach viewed the Kingdom of God as a real, concrete utopia, with democratic socialism as a model. Physicist Hans-Jürgen Fischbeck, one advocate of this idea, not only argued that the rule of the Socialist Unity Party in East Germany was illegitimate but also criticized Western capitalist democracies.³² According to this approach, human rights based on a Western or liberal model would not play an important role in ideal politics and society; if they did, it would only be relative to collective social conditions. The second option, as theologian Richard Schröder

formulated it, viewed the Kingdom of God as an ideal. Following the traditional Lutheran idea of the two kingdoms, this stance held that the Kingdom of God was the *Kingdom of God*. Temporal power and authority were distinct from it, although not necessarily negative.³³ The consequence of this approach for its protagonists was that democracy was to be sought for rational reasons, for the improved functioning of the state and society, and not because of any theological justification. Human rights had a place in this concept, but only as the foundation of a liberal democracy built to a Western standard. The statement “More Justice in the GDR” successfully bridged the two theological arguments, but the subsequent history of the East German transition shows that proponents of these positions followed different political tracks.

From a historical perspective, the discourse on human rights and the coming of God’s Kingdom marked a watershed in the long, ambivalent history of German Protestantism and human rights. Forced by the external political pressure of the Helsinki Accords, by the internal pressure of the SED dictatorship, by the demands of younger Christians engaged in political opposition, and, lastly, by ongoing secularization in the GDR, East German Protestants finally accepted human rights expressed in a secular language and defined as the highest normative standard for a democratic system. With that development, a 300-year tradition of skepticism toward the idea of human rights came to an end.

Czech Protestants and Human Rights

The argument that German Protestant engagement with the issue of human rights represented a theological *Sonderweg*, with its own national and cultural features and resulting discourse, can be seen clearly by taking a comparative glance at Czechoslovakia. Though Czech and East German Protestants lived in neighboring socialist states and drew from common theological sources, their views of human rights and the cultural and historical contexts that shaped those views were quite different. The following section points out some of these different developments in Czech Protestantism. The aim of this comparison, in following a cultural history approach, is to show the two different sets of

mentalities, within two adjacent Protestant groups, in regard to questions of human rights, modernity, and secularization.

A main difference in the socio-political situations in the GDR and Czechoslovakia during the 1970s and 1980s was that Czechoslovakia had only one significant platform of opposition and defense of human rights, Charter 77, while in East Germany there existed various small oppositional groups. The one major group to emerge in the GDR, the Initiative for Peace and Human Rights (*Initiative Frieden und Menschenrechte*), was founded only in 1986 and explicitly followed the model of Charter 77. With this background in mind, a historical analysis of the mentalities, the political motives, and theological convictions of the Protestant signatories of Charter 77 has special relevance. However (and this is a valuable aim for further academic research), none of the historical, political, and sociological studies of Charter 77 have addressed the confessional affiliation of its members. H. Gordon Skilling's interviews with Charter 77 signatories in the 1980s included Protestant voices, but confessional affiliation or religious views were not made explicit or developed.³⁴ In her comparative study of Czech and East German dissidents, Annette Lutz considered religious identity as a motivational factor and the importance of the church as shelter for the opposition in the GDR, but she neglected to explore these topics with the Czech dissidents, and therefore had inconsistent results.³⁵ Finally, Gil Eyal, who in 2003 presented a sort of sociological group biography of Charter 77, oversimplified matters by subsuming Ladislav Hejdínek, a Protestant philosopher and a confessing member of the Church of the Czech Brethren, into the category "philosopher and intellectual."³⁶ This academic disregard of religion missed an important point: Among the 242 initial signers of Charter 77, over 7 percent were pastors and nearly 10 percent were lay members of the Church of the Czech Brethren.³⁷ Given that only 2 percent of the whole population belonged to the Church (between 200,000 and 240,000 people), Czech Protestants were over-represented among Charter 77 members.³⁸ In light of this remarkably high endorsement of the Charter 77 movement, the question arises as to why Czech Protestants, unlike East Germans, were more disposed to the defense of human rights.

In the twentieth century, Czech Protestants were much more familiar with traditions of liberal theology and political thought. Czechoslovakia, after its foundation in 1918, was one of the more open societ-

ies in Eastern Europe, combining a stable democracy with a relatively high educational standard among its people.³⁹ The first president of the new republic, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, was an advocate of the Anglo-American concept of individual rights and a role model for a liberal, constructive middle class, prompting some Czechs to combine commitment for democracy and human rights with civic involvement, even from an early stage of the state's independence. Furthermore, Masaryk's own religious biography exemplified the potential political relevance of Protestantism in modern European society.⁴⁰ Turning from the Catholic Church in 1870 and entering into the Reformed Protestant Church in 1880, Masaryk pinned his hopes on Protestantism, which he associated with democratic developments in his country and throughout Europe.

As president, Masaryk supported the 1920 union of the Czech Lutheran and Reformed churches into a single Protestant institution: the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (*Českobratrská církev evangelická*). He also supported the formation in the same year of the Czechoslovak chapter of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), with which he had first come into contact during his visits to the United States. The YMCA, particularly the Academic Section, which issued publications and organized symposia and lectures, was influential for the development of the postwar generation of Czech Protestant intellectuals and their support for human rights. Leaders of the Academic YMCA were theologian Josef Lukl Hromádka and philosopher Emanuel Rádl, both supporters of Masaryk's political philosophy and regular commentators on Czechoslovak democracy; Rádl in particular was a strong proponent of the concept of individual human rights as opposed to the collective rights of nations. Nearly all of the leading theologians of the Church of the Czech Brethren in the postwar period participated in activities of the Academic YMCA. (Another prominent figure in the YMCA from its founding was Václav M. Havel, father of the future president.)

Among these Czech Protestant participants in the Academic YMCA who later signed Charter 77 was Božena Komárková.⁴¹ A teacher of history and philosophy at a gymnasium in Moravia, she was arrested by the Gestapo in June 1942 on charges of being involved with the Czech underground resistance. After the war she earned a doctorate in philosophy at Masaryk University in Brno and submitted a

habitation thesis on human rights in nineteenth-century philosophy. Shortly before completing her study, she was dismissed from her teaching position. She became involved from the early 1950s in the political underground, organizing student groups. During the Prague Spring, Komárková, together with the phenomenologist philosopher Jan Patočka, was influential in working out in simple and clear language a defense of human rights as a fundamental European and Protestant value.

Komárková was a central figure in the history of Czech Protestantism because of her writings but, above all, because of her high moral and educational authority. In her underground work with students, she gathered around herself a group of young, gifted theologians and philosophers, who also joined the Charter 77 movement. One of these intellectuals was Ladislav Hejdlánek, who was strongly influenced by Masaryk and especially Rádl.⁴² Hejdlánek, who always described himself as a member of the Czech Brethren, saw the recognition of civil rights and of human freedom as practical evidence of a living Christian faith: "Does religion, does Christianity still have a firm place for us and in the world, or any positive function or perspective in today's society? I can also add another question, which a Marxist recently posed to me openly and directly: Is there any positive meaning to be gleaned from the fact that in the struggle for fundamental human rights, freedom of religion in particular has been emphasized?"⁴³ He went on to answer his question: "Only action is fitting here. This can only be decided in practical life. The struggle for observance of the law and for the respect of civil rights and human liberty is one such opportunity for action, for demonstrating practically that Christianity is still alive."⁴⁴

Another member of Komárková's circle was the minister and theologian Jakub Trojan. Like Hejdlánek, Trojan also absorbed Masaryk's admiration of liberal democracy, and he added a sharp rejection of Luther's concept of the two kingdoms.⁴⁵ Trojan did reflect a hesitation about the natural basis of rights rooted in his Christian perspective. Yet he understood the liberal notion of human rights as central to Czech political thought, from Masaryk back to the leaders of the nineteenth-century nationalist movement, and he brought this secular understanding into his theology: "Even though I personally do not share the philosophy that provided the basis for the formulation of human rights at the UN—I prefer to think of it as a spiritual act whereby responsible

citizens agreed to recognise each others' dignity and independence, rather than the natural component of the human make-up—I consider that they have a major regulatory role to play in society... This is the task which [nineteenth-century journalist Karel] Havlíček, [historian František] Palacky, and Masaryk had in mind when they formulated the ethics of public life and politics in our country.”⁴⁶

Beginning in the 1950s, Trojan belonged to a group of younger Czech theologians and pastors called the “New Orientation” (*Nová orientace*) who sought to represent the church in a more authentic way to an increasingly secular society. In this aim, Trojan and his group were inspired by the ideas of Rádl, Hromádka, and Bonhoeffer, along with those of Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich, and Reinhold Niebuhr. Their reading, however, of the German and American theologians was necessarily selective. Of Bonhoeffer’s works, for example, they only knew his last letters, published under the title *Widerstand und Ergebung* [Reality and Resistance]. The group found resonance with Bonhoeffer’s personal example of a man in opposition to the authoritarian state as well as his thoughts about a religionless Christianity. However, the theologian’s critical position toward the liberal idea of human rights was unknown to them at the time. In contrast to the view Bonhoeffer had held, Czech Protestants of the New Orientation regarded human rights as self-evident and an elemental condition of modern society. During the Prague Spring reforms, these young Czech Protestants pleaded for a theological parallel to Alexander Dubček’s “socialism with a human face.” But following the Warsaw Pact invasion of August 1968 and the imposition of “normalization” under Dubček’s successor, Gustav Husák, members of the group and other younger pastors in the Church of the Czech Brethren were arrested and lost their jobs.⁴⁷ Those who were not jailed campaigned for the amnesty of imprisoned Christians and stood up for human rights and religious freedom; a few years later, they were among the first signatories of Charter 77. Thus the involvement of these Czech Protestants with the opposition movement of the 1970s and 1980s was only one more link in a long chain of political involvement under communism.

Charter 77 was a means of opposition and an intellectual forum but also a source of mutual support for its members. The movement pleaded for individual human and civil rights—religious freedom, freedom of speech, and freedom of movement—in clear, politically con-

crete statements and documents. A successful alternative social model, whose signatories grew from 242 to 800 by the end of 1977, its character was properly described in biblical language by Jiří Hájek, foreign minister during the 1968 reforms: "It all goes slowly, at a snail's pace, but still in the right direction. We proceed forward, relying on the laws, as the Bible says, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill.' And so I think that we have reached the point when the Charter cannot be eradicated. It has emerged in the midst of this society and it is here to stay."⁴⁸

Given the importance of Protestant—and Catholic—clergy and laypeople in Charter 77, Christians can be seen as the third force of the group, alongside reformed communists and non-communist artists and intellectuals.⁴⁹ These Christians understood themselves as part of a legal movement seeking democracy, the rule of law, and social pluralism. Until the end of 1989, this Christian wing of Charter 77 constantly issued statements on religious freedom and freedom of thought.⁵⁰ Whereas Protestants in the GDR never developed a similar common oppositional group linking different social and political milieus, Czech Brethren pastors and theologians saw human rights as a natural element of Protestant thought. As seven pastors of the Church of the Czech Brethren who were participants in Charter 77 argued, "The question of human rights...emerged from these intellectual roots, which go back to the Reformation and the Nonconformist movement of the churches in the English-speaking world. The values of our reformation—the free proclamation of God's word, the idea of religious tolerance, and the respect for conviction—bring us close to these ideals."⁵¹

This reference to the Bohemian reformation, beginning with Jan Hus in the fourteenth century and culminating with the seventeenth-century philosopher and bishop Jan Amos Komenský, suggests that nationalist Protestant narratives also played an important role in providing a historical background for accepting the legitimacy of human rights. The phrase "our reformation" indicates a deliberate distancing from the German reformation of Martin Luther with its different images of the Kingdom of God. Framed by this understanding of church history, as well as the strong understanding of being a persecuted religious minority, Czech Protestants understood concepts of individual freedom and human rights as part of a long-established national religious identity.

It was therefore easier for Czech pastors and theologians in Charter 77 to accept that they were in conflict not only with the state but also with the “official church”: those members of the Czech Brethren who did not belong to the underground and, in particular, still held their offices in the Church’s synodal council. The distance between these two factions was made apparent in the 1977 exchange between Protestant Chartists and professors of Prague’s Komenský Protestant Theological Faculty. On April 22, Charter 77 submitted to the government a critical analysis of the state’s failure to protect religious freedom in Czechoslovakia. The Theological Faculty responded on May 24 with a statement denying the legitimacy of religious freedom as a human right. Referring to the socialist model, the Faculty declared, “We see the socialist movement as an expression of human longing for freedom and social justice. We are thankful for everything that is being achieved in this respect in our country. We believe that the most suitable social order is socialist, one which enables us to find solutions to the basic problems in the historical path of humanity. By virtue of our faith and the aforementioned reasons, we see socialist society as a space in which we can do our work without secondary motives. Every suggestion that it is possible to see socialist society as something temporary (and not permanent) weakens our theology and disables our creative activity.”⁵²

The Faculty’s statement marked the end of the dialogue of these two wings of Czech Protestantism.⁵³ But the split was not simply one between dissidents and collaborators; the Faculty’s response was not only a statement of support for the socialist state but also an expression of a longstanding theological tradition. In stating their support for socialism, the professors followed the views of prominent German and Czech theologians, most notably the former dean (until his death in 1969) of the Theological Faculty, Josef Lukl Hromádka. Already in the interwar period, when he was leading the Academic YMCA, Hromádka endorsed socialism. And after World War II he pronounced his belief in the shared aims of Marxists and Christians and the primacy of social responsibility and collective rights over liberal individual rights. At the foundation of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948, just after the Communist Party had seized power in Czechoslovakia, Hromádka indicated his sympathy for the change in government, saying, “Doesn’t one smell, behind all these ringing slogans about ‘free democracy,’ behind all these endeavours to ‘defend per-

sonal freedom' and 'free enterprise'... the material, economic interest of big industry and financial concerns?... Discipline, service, responsibility, self-control and self-sacrifice are in certain circumstances more important than human rights."⁵⁴

Hromádka's importance in twentieth-century Czech Protestantism and his leadership in ecumenical organizations raised a special problem for Czech Brethren members of Charter 77. Božena Komárková and other intellectuals respected Hromádka for his leadership of the Academic YMCA, and Ladislav Hejdlánek, Jakub Trojan, and members of the New Orientation had been influenced by his theology and his calls for dialogue between Christians and Marxists, but Hromádka never belonged to circles of the Protestant underground. Furthermore, Hromádka's reputation, especially in progressive Protestant circles in Western Europe, made it difficult for Protestant signatories of Charter 77 to gain international support. His European supporters refused to acknowledge the concrete violations of human rights under the socialist government in Czechoslovakia.⁵⁵ Consequently, the arguments of Protestant Charter 77 members for a liberal understanding of human rights remained more or less only among Czech Brethren clergy and other Chartists. Not until after 1989 were these Protestant dissidents able to voice their advocacy of human rights to the Czech church as a whole and to ecumenical organizations.

As this comparison of East German and Czech Protestants shows, the issue of human rights caused deep divisions among Christians, arising out of theological and political differences. Protestant participants in the Charter 77 movement saw their campaign for a liberal understanding of human rights and the associated protest against the socialist dictatorship as an integral part of their confessional identity as Czech Brethren. Justification for this stance referred to a collective memory of the Bohemian reformation and to a national tradition of progressive, democratic political and social thought, dating from the late nineteenth century and embodied by Tomáš Masaryk. German Protestants lacked this positive example of an alliance between democracy and Protestantism. Their skepticism concerning human rights, which had its origins in Protestant responses to the French Revolution, persisted into the twentieth century. This long-lasting tradition survived into the 1970s, when the Helsinki Process widened the intellectual horizon of East German Protestants to such an extent that

they could begin to approach the human rights issue. But crucial differences remained between Protestant opposition groups in the GDR and Czechoslovakia. Czech Protestants wanted to realize social and political changes in their republic through legal, constitutional changes. They argued for a liberal concept of human rights and signed Charter 77 and several other documents advocating religious freedom. For Protestants in East Germany (as well as in West Germany), it was much more difficult to find this clarity in expressing human rights as a fundamental Christian value.

Overall, it is remarkable that Protestant churches and groups, despite often cooperating or even actively collaborating with the socialist state, could—as did the Catholic Church in some East European countries—become an important source of alternative political ideas and activist strategies. The discourse on human rights in the GDR and Czechoslovakia is an example of this. Protestant perspectives on human rights in Central and Eastern Europe were laden with complexity and even ambiguity. Human rights in the Protestant tradition in Germany and Czechoslovakia were not a finished concept or a coherent ideology but rather a discursive frame, an ideological battleground. Even as we recognize that national and confessional traditions played an important role, the question remains as to whether there is something behind these differences that could be taken as a collective European Protestant mentality concerning modernity and human rights.

NOTES

- 1 Hanna Diskin, *The Seeds of Triumph: Church and State in Gomulka's Poland* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001). Two early works that interpreted the East German *Wende* as a "Protestant revolution" are Gerhard Rein, ed., *Die Protestantische Revolution, 1987–1990: Ein deutsches Lesebuch* (Berlin: Wichern, 1990); and Erhardt Neubert, "Eine protestantische Revolution," *Deutschland Archiv* 23 (1990): 704–713.
- 2 Hugh McLeod, Risto Saarinen, and Aila Lauha, *North European Churches: From Cold War to Globalisation* (Tampere: Publications of the Church Research Institute, 2006), 77.
- 3 John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- 4 See, for example: Sabrina P. Ramet, *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics, and Social Change in East Central Europe and Russia* (Durham, NC, and London:

- Duke University Press, 1998); William H. Swatos, ed., *Politics and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe: Traditions and Transitions* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994); Patrick Michel and Alan Braley, *Politics and Religion in Eastern Europe: Catholicism in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992); Detlef Pollack, Irena Borowik, and Wolfgang Jagodzinski, eds., *Religiöser Wandel in den postkommunistischen Ländern Mittel- und Osteuropas* (Würzburg: Ergon 1998); Miklós Tomka and Paul Zulehner, *Gott nach dem Kommunismus: Religion in den Reformländern Ost(Mittel)Europas* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 1999); Jens Holger Schjørring, ed., *Zwischen den Mühlsteinen: Protestantische Kirchen in der Phase der Errichtung der kommunistischen Herrschaft im östlichen Europa* (Erlangen: Martin Luther Verlag, 2002); Jens Holger Schjørring and Hartmut Lehmann, eds., *Im Räderwerk des real existierenden Sozialismus: Kirchen in Ostmittel- und Osteuropa von Stalin bis Gorbatschow* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003); Jens Holger Schjørring and Peter Maser, eds., *Wie die Träumenden? Kirchen in der Phase des Zusammenbruchs der kommunistischen Herrschaft im östlichen Europa* (Erlangen: Martin Luther Verlag, 2003); and Manfred Spieker, ed., *Vom Sozialismus zum demokratischen Rechtsstaat: Der Beitrag der katholischen Soziallehre zu den Transformationsprozessen in Polen und der ehemaligen DDR* (Paderborn: Schönigh Verlag, 1992).
- 5 See, for example: Martin Schulze Wessel, *Nationalisierung der Religion und Sakralisierung der Nation im östlichen Europa* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006); István Keul, *Religion, Ethnie, Nation und die Aushandlung von Identität(en): Regionale Religionsgeschichte in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2005); Peter F. Sugar, *East European Nationalism, Politics and Religion* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 1999); George Weigel, *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); and Niels C. Nielsen, *Revolutions in Eastern Europe: The Religious Roots* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991).
 - 6 For further discussion of the churches in the GDR, see Katharina Seifert, *Glaube und Politik: Die Ökumenische Versammlung in der DDR 1988/89* (Leipzig: Benno Verlag, 2000); Werner Leich, *Du aber bleibst im Wechsel der Horizonte: Lebenserinnerung* (Wartburg Verlag, 2002); Gottfried Forck and Christa Sengespeick, *Das ganz Normale tun: Widerstandsräume in der DDR-Kirche* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1996); Albrecht Schönherr, *Gratwanderung* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1992); and Hagen Findeis and Detlef Pollack, *Selbstbewahrung oder Selbstverlust: Bischöfe und Repräsentanten* (Berlin: Christoph Links, 1999).
 - 7 Ute Frevert, *Vertrauen. Historische Annäherungen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2003).
 - 8 A good overview of the debate over the mentalities of religious groups is offered in Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, "Religion in Geschichte und Gesellschaft: Sozialhistorische Perspektiven für die vergleichende Erforschung religiöser Mentalitäten und Milieus," in Olaf Blaschke

- and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, eds., *Religion im Kaiserreich: Milieus—Mentalitäten—Krisen* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996), 7–56.
- 9 Gert-Joachim Glaeßner, *Demokratie nach dem Ende des Sozialismus: Regimewechsel, Transition und Postkommunismus* (Cologne: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1994), 126–128.
 - 10 Richard Allen, *Prelates and People: Ecclesiastical Social Thought in England, 1783–1852* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), quoted in Martin Greschat, *Industrielle Revolution* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1980), 22.
 - 11 Hartmut Lehmann, *Pietismus und weltliche Ordnung in Württemberg vom 17.–20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969), 225.
 - 12 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “The Church and the New Order in Europe,” in Mark S. Brocker, Lisa E. Dahill, and Douglas W. Stott, eds., *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* vol. 16, *Conspiracy and Imprisonment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 532. Emphasis in original.
 - 13 The distinction between Bonhoeffer’s understanding of freedom and human rights and the liberal tradition of human rights in North America and Western Europe is also clearly pointed out in the afterword to Bonhoeffer’s *Ethics: Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke*, vol. 6, *Ethik* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998), 437. See also Heinz Eduard Tödt, “Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s Ethik und die Menschenrechte,” in Ernst-Albert Scharffenorth, ed., *Theologische Perspektiven nach Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Munich: Kaiser Verlag, 1993), 139–142.
 - 14 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, in Clifford J. Green, ed., *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* vol. 6 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 356. Emphasis in original.
 - 15 Quoted by Martin Greschat, “Ökumenisches Handeln der Kirchen in den Zeiten des Kalten Krieges,” *Ökumenische Rundschau* 1 (2000): 15.
 - 16 The following is based on Katharina Kunter, “Vor Freiheit bewahre uns, o Herr! Deutschlands Protestanten, auch Dietrich Bonhoeffer, taten sich mit den Menschenrechten schwer,” *Zeitzeichen* 2 (2002): 17–19; and Katharina Kunter, “Wegweiser aus Amerika. Mit den Freiheitsrechten des Einzelnen taten sich Deutschlands Protestanten lange schwer,” *Zeitzeichen* 12 (2003): 28–30.
 - 17 Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, *Kirche und Recht: Ein vom Rat der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland veranlasstes Gespräch über die christliche Begründung des Rechts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950).
 - 18 Karl Barth, *Church and State*, trans. G. Ronald Howe (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1939); originally published as *Rechtfertigung und Recht* (1938), 81.
 - 19 *Ibid.*, 84.
 - 20 Kenneth G. Grubb, et al., *The Church and International Disorder: An Ecumenical Study Prepared Under the Auspices of the World Council of Churches* (London: SCM, 1948).
 - 21 See Paul Wuthe, *Für Menschenrechte und Religionsfreiheit in Europa: Die Politik des Heiligen Stuhls in der KSZE/OSZE* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2002); and Eric Hanson, *The Catholic Church in World Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978).

- 22 See Katharina Kunter, *Die Kirchen im KSZE-Prozess 1968–1978* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000).
- 23 See, for example, Wolfgang Huber and Heinz Eduard Tödt, *Menschenrechte: Perspektiven einer menschlichen Welt* (München: Christian Kaiser, 1977); and Martin Honecker, *Das Recht des Menschen* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1977).
- 24 Theologischer Studienausschuss des Nationalkomitees des Lutherischen Weltbundes in der DDR, ed., *Sorge um eine menschliche Welt. Normativität und Relativität der Menschenrechte* (1974) in the private archive of Günter Krusche, Berlin. This was published in part in *Kirchliches Jahrbuch 1975*, 486–495. See also Günter Krusche, “Menschenrechte in christlicher Verantwortung. Die Kirchen in der DDR und die Menschenrechte,” *Ökumenische Rundschau* 49 (2000): 26–42.
- 25 Statement of the Synod of the BEK, May 13–15, 1977, in *Mitteilungsblatt des BEK in der DDR* (Berlin, 1977), 18–24, in Evangelisches Zentralarchiv 101/602, Berlin.
- 26 Data on opposition groups from Detlef Pollack, *Politischer Protest: Politisch alternative Gruppen* (Wiesbaden: Verlag Leske & Biderich, 2000), 137–139; and Pollack, *Kirche in der Organisationsgesellschaft: Zum Wandel der gesellschaftlichen Lage der evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1994), 373–379.
- 27 See report of Christoph Demke on the Konferenz der Kirchenleitungen, December 3, 1988, in Evangelisches Zentralarchiv 688/84, Berlin.
- 28 See, for example, Friedrich Schorlemmer, “Umkehren und Umgestalten: Rede auf dem Evangelischen Kirchentag in Halle Juni 1988,” in *Bis alle Mauern fallen: Texte aus einem verschwundenen Land* (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1991), 48–67.
- 29 The postcards are collected in Evangelisches Zentralarchiv Bestand 117, Berlin.
- 30 For analysis of the postcard replies, see Katharina Kunter, *Erfüllte Hoffnungen und zerbrochene Träume: Evangelische Kirchen in Deutschland im Spannungsfeld von Demokratie und Sozialismus (1980–1993)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2006), 173–189.
- 31 Evangelischer Pressedienst Dokumentation, no. 6 (1989).
- 32 Hans-Jürgen Fischbeck, letter to Working Group 3, undated, in private archive of Heiko Lietz, Berlin.
- 33 Evangelischer Pressedienst Dokumentation, no. 6 (1989), 2.
- 34 H. Gordon Skilling, *Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989); and H. Gordon Skilling and Paul Wilson, ed., *Civic Freedom in Central and Eastern Europe: Voices from Czechoslovakia* (London: Macmillan, 1991).
- 35 Annabelle Lutz, *Dissidenten und Bürgerbewegung: Ein Vergleich zwischen der DDR und Tschechoslowakei* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1999).
- 36 Gil Eyal, *The Origins of the Postcommunist Elites: From Prague Spring to the Breakup of Czechoslovakia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

- 37 Thank you to Jan Dus and Alfred Kocab, Prague, for help in identifying and counting Christian members of Charter 77.
- 38 "Kirchen in der ČSSR I, Zahlenspiegel," in *ČSSR. Zur Lage der evangelischen Kirche der Böhmisches Brüder: Eine Dokumentation* (Küsnacht: Glaube in der Zweiten Welt Verlag, 1978), 3.
- 39 See Libor Prudký, "Die Kirche in der Tschechischen Republik—ihre Situation und Entwicklung," in Libor Prudký, Pero Aračić, Krunoslav Nikodem, Franjo Šanjek, Witold Zdaniewicz, and Miklós Tomka, *Religion und Kirchen in Ost(Mittel)Europa: Tschechien, Kroatien, Polen* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag, 2001), 29.
- 40 See the unpublished essay by Bruce R. Berglund, "Prague Castle as Sacred Acropolis: Faith, Conviction, and Skepticism in the House of Masaryk" (paper presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 21, 2006).
- 41 I am thankful to Jan Šimsa, Brno, who shared his knowledge of Komárková in a two-day interview. See also Jan Šimsa, "Solidariteit met de geschokte," in Božena Komárková, *Leven van de geef: Christen-zijn in Tsjechië onder het nationaal-socialisme en het communisme* (Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok, 1998), 118–127.
- 42 Milan Walter, "Ladislav Hejránek: Eine biographische Skizze," in Ladislav Hejránek, *Wahrheit und Widerstand. Prager Briefe* (Kirchheim: P. Kirchheim Verlag, 1988), 276–279; and interview with Hejránek in Doris Liebermann, Jürgen Fuchs, and Vlasta Wallat, eds., *Dissidenten, Präsidenten und Gemüsehändler: Tschechische und ostdeutsche Dissidenten 1968–1998* (Essen: Klartext, 1998), 141–154.
- 43 Ladislav Hejránek, "Was ist Christentum?" in *Wahrheit und Widerstand: Prager Briefe*, 92.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 97.
- 45 Jakub S. Trojan, "Ferdinand und andere unerfreuliche Kapitel," in Jakub S. Trojan, *Entfremdung und Nachfolge: Zwei theologisch-politische Essays* (Munich: Kaiser Verlag, 1980), 87–166. See also Wim Stougie, "Ethiek, moraal en de kerk. Portret van de Tsjechische theolog Jakub Trojan," in *Bulletin kerkelijke contacten Tsjechië en Slowakije*, no. 13 (1996), 6–7.
- 46 Jakub S. Trojan, *And the Nightingales Sing: Theological Reflections and Dialogues, Kostelec nad Labem 1980–1982* (Prague: Oikumene, 1992), 278.
- 47 Glaube in der 2. Welt, ČSSR. *Zur Lage der evangelischen Kirche der Böhmisches Brüder. Eine Dokumentation* (Küsnacht: Verlag Glaube in der Zweiten Welt, 1978), 12.
- 48 *Svenska Dagbladet*, November 13, 1977, quoted in Vladimir V. Kusin, *From Dubček to Charter 77: A Study of "Normalization" in Czechoslovakia, 1968–1978* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), 325.
- 49 Jakub Trojan, "The Position of the Churches throughout the Changes in the Czechoslovakian Society," in Joseph Pungur, ed., *An Eastern European Liberation Theology* (Calgary: Canada Angelus, 1992), 248–268.

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- 53 "Pfarrer zwischen den Zäunen. Alfred Kocáb, Pfarrer an der Prager Salvator-Gemeinde der EKBB," in *Dissidenten, Präsidenten und Gemüsehändler*, 130–140, especially 135.
- 54 Quoted in Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 273. See also Ökumenischer Rat der Kirchen, ed., *Die Unordnung der Welt und Gottes Heilsplan: Die Kirche und die internationale Unordnung*, Band 4 (Geneva: ÖRK, 1948), 134–167.
- 55 Alfred Kocáb, "Wo hat es angefangen!? Zur Rolle von Josef L. Hromádka im Ost-West-Konflikt," in Heinz-Jürgen Joppien, ed., *Der Ökumenische Rat der Kirchen in den Konflikten des Kalten Krieges* (Frankfurt: Verlag Otto Lembeck, 2000), 310–315.

State Management of the Seer Vanga

Power, Medicine, and the “Remaking” of Religion in Socialist Bulgaria

GALIA VALTCHINOVA

Introduction

The conventional wisdom holds that religion was suppressed in, or absent from, communist societies. But proponents of this interpretation often obscure facts that counter the black-and-white view. Based on careful ethnographies, anthropologists such as Caroline Humphrey and Katherine Verdery have shown the dangers of oversimplification in the study of socialism. Similarly, the anthropological study of religion also refuses easy dichotomies.¹ The “domestication” formula is already applied to religion in the USSR with regard to the local-level negotiation between the official discourses and ongoing practices.² The rigid interpretations of religion under socialism were challenged in an analysis of ritual, an area of study that highlights transformation and more vividly depicts state socialism’s failure to uproot religiosity.³ Ritual is part of the religious realm: after religious rituals were banned from the public (though not necessarily the private) life of “socialist citizens,” other rituals were invented. Ritual life just shifted from one domain of life to another.⁴ As a site for the expression of symbolic relationships, ritual is the arena where power materializes and is negotiated.

More attentive to local practice, the anthropology of postsocialism also pays attention to the local actors of religious life. The sociology of religion has also inspired this approach; from Luckmann’s “invisible religion” to “religion as memory” to “religion in everyday life” in the new French sociology, there is a marked shift from a church-oriented perspective to a societal- and actor-oriented one.⁵ This shift is defended by the philosopher Charles Taylor, who demonstrated the importance of non-institutional religion and the “less structured” spiritualities.⁶

Religious Revival in Postsocialist Bulgaria: The Importance of the Local Lens

While providing the most suitable framework for historical research, the church is no longer the exclusive lens for viewing everyday religious life in European societies. This is all the more true for Bulgarian society, which experienced secularization in the early years of communism.⁷ Applied to socialist Bulgaria, the church-oriented perspective emphasized two phenomena: on the one hand, the harsh treatment of the clergy paralleled by the repression of religiosity and the imposition of “atheism”; on the other hand, the preservation of the Orthodox Church as an institution and its manipulation by the regime for nationalist goals. Both took place, yet both obscure less visible developments that have come to attention only recently, when approaching the nexus of religion and communism from the perspective of postsocialism.⁸ In Orthodox Bulgaria today, as far as local societies are concerned, the driving forces behind the religious revival are “small” and overwhelmingly lay actors, not the Church.⁹

The salient role of local lay actors was evident in the field work I carried out in 1994–1997 in Trun, a small town in western Bulgaria, near the Serbian (Yugoslav) border, noted for its cult to the local patron saint. Field research has shown that the postsocialist religious revival in the town was mainly due to the activism of some middle-aged and elderly women who won the financial support of local businessmen. The Orthodox Church was largely absent from the parish churches in this impoverished area. In the mid-1990s, the local parish priest was said to be busier with black-market and petrol smuggling for Serbia (then under international embargo) than working for souls. The lay (and female) actors involved in the religious revival had different motivations: most declared that they were “led by the pure faith,” although some hoped for divine rewards in exchange for earthly services. The most active, a retired unmarried woman (G.) and a middle-aged unemployed mother (D.), explained that their deep personal involvement was inspired by divine agency, through dreaming. After her retirement in 1989, G. started seeing dead relatives in dreams. They urged her to keep a record of ongoing events and to care for the semi-ruined chapel dedicated to Saint Petka, the town’s patron saint. When

the chapel was finally restored in 1993, G. was “called,” in a dream, to be its gatekeeper. She started to tell visitors “the true story” of the saint’s life and deeds. The first time I heard the story, I was struck by the reference to Vanga, the still-living seer, whose authority was invoked to support “truth” and to give credit to the saint’s cult. During subsequent repetitions of the story, I noticed that Vanga was always evoked to assess “the truth” in matters deemed inaccessible to human knowledge.

In 2000, the much younger D. had taken over the day-to-day maintenance of the chapel, a highly prestigious activity in the eyes of the local believers. Feeling the resistance of some elderly women to her increased importance in the management of the holy place, she minimized her own role, presenting it as a “cleaning” entrusted by divine will. To support this version, a story of a dream was circulated in which Vanga appeared to D., giving her an apron and, in a sense, appointing her to maintain the chapel.

These cases—like others I have explored—show that, as far as Orthodoxy is concerned, the religious revival was initiated from “below” and carried out by lay people, simple believers, or religious entrepreneurs.¹⁰ The Church and religious specialists, in the strict sense of the word, played a very modest role in the myriad of local revivals, at least at their beginnings. The cases in Trun also display the symbolic role of the seer Vanga in the actors’ self-legitimizing procedures and motivation. Indeed Vanga (Evangelia Gushterova, 1911–1996), the *vračka* [seer/healer] from the small border town of Petrić, indelibly marked the whole socialist era.¹¹ When we observe the ways and the contexts in which the famous seer was invoked, or referred to, by the religious entrepreneurs, her influence in the construction of the postcommunist models of religiosity becomes evident.

Talking about new models of religiosity implies that a major shift took place in the structure of “religion” and at every level of religious life. To understand this change, we must look at the notion of religious specialists, keeping in mind the distinction between them and ritual specialists in general who work outside any religious setting.¹² After briefly outlining the working concepts, I will show how the popular religious specialist Vanga was presented by the communist regime and party-sponsored “science” as both a “doctor” and a “prophet.”

Approaching “Religious Specialists”

Shifting from the church-centered perspective to the actor-oriented one, it should be boldly stated that people, in their everyday practice, do not apply the categories of “religion” and “religiousness” as defined by churches. While “religion” primarily involves doctrine and the institutional framework of its exercise, “religiousness” refers to dealing with mental structures and the practice of worship in day-to-day religious life.

To the modern lay person, recourse to a popular expert for healing or mediation with the supernatural world *are* religious practices even if, from a strictly church-centric perspective, they are not “religion.” Healers and popular mystics do not dissociate themselves from religious practitioners; many claim that they are faithful and that they act according to the dominant religious precepts. I include such popular religious experts in the category of *religious specialist*, as Victor Turner did in advocating the inclusion under the umbrella of “religion” of diviners, seers, mediums, witches, etc.—in a word, all those who manipulate the supernatural in a special way to their own society’s end.¹³ This viewpoint was developed by students of Muslim and Christian cultures who explored how the function of such specialists constantly switched between “religion” and “medicine.” Thus Ernest Gellner showed how Moroccan “living saints” were also doctors and experts in conflict resolution.¹⁴ Students of rural Greece demonstrated the importance of locally renowned folk and religious healers as viable alternatives to modern medicine but also (albeit with less success) to church-based religious life.¹⁵ In the same vein, a seer/healer might serve perfectly as a religious actor in Bulgarian socialist society.

Making the category of religious specialist more inclusive helps us to better use the concept of a *religious field*. Pierre Bourdieu defines this as either a system of relationships of concurrence or a transaction between religious agents, the latter being defined by their positioning *vis-à-vis* the monopolist institution, the church. The constitution of a religious field—the rationalization of beliefs and rituals, and the “moralization” of the religion practiced by the peasant population—clearly coincides with the modernization of a society. It is paralleled by the loss of religious capital owned by lay people and the concentra-

tion of both religious knowledge and religious skills in the hands of a professional body (the clergy), jealous of its monopoly over religion.¹⁶ A more nuanced approach is offered by French anthropologist J.P. Albert, who elaborated on Weber's definition of religious expertise and charisma. According to his proposal, this field (*le champ du sacré*) consists of a plurality of positions and statuses deployed between two opposites, the "sacerdotal" one, represented by the church and priests, and the "prophetic" one, associated with the "margins" of the institutional religion and with religious innovation.¹⁷ Built on the example of Catholic mystic women and saints, Albert's thesis also works well in Balkan Orthodox contexts.

Bourdieu held that the growing gap between the religious professionals and the actors within the "magical-religious" realm was a result of the struggle for monopoly over the sacred. In the 1980s he admitted that the shaping of a religious-medical field was going on, a trend developed in recent studies.¹⁸ Thus the practitioners of new religious movements and of New Age-type spirituality, as well as of alternative medicines, found a place in his influential theory as actors in the religious field next to the classical religious specialists. The role of such experts is to "bridge the humanist/spiritual boundary and practices that link spirituality and therapy."¹⁹

Deconstructing the Religious Field in Modern Bulgaria

The notion of a religious field provides useful insights into the structure and loci of religious life in the context of state socialism. It has been suggested that in the Balkans, the communist regimes were not so much anti-religious as they were anti-clerical.²⁰ Most of the measures taken by various communist regimes against the churches were comparable to the radical, state-led secularization that some Western societies have experienced in the course of the twentieth century.²¹ Yet for the Orthodox churches, the general approach to the regimes was not opposition but accommodation. The political obedience of the Orthodox churches is usually correlated to their relationship to the respective nations and the nationalist commitment of the Balkan communist regimes.²² Historical circumstances allowed for the interdependency

between the autocephalous Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the national state. Created in 1870 by a decision of the Ottoman Sultan, the Bulgarian Exarchate preceded the national state and to a large extent determined the space and the front lines of Bulgarian nationalism. In 1872 the Exarchate was stigmatized by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople for *phyletism* [ethnicism]. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church was not recognized by other Orthodox churches and was practically isolated for seventy years.²³ With the help of the Moscow Patriarchate, the schism was finally removed in 1945; again, lay channels of power and connivance between “fraternal” communist states proved helpful for the recovery of the Bulgarian Patriarchate in 1953. If the first decade following the September 1944 coup was marked by several waves of anti-religious persecutions, open mass persecutions of Orthodox believers were no longer recorded after 1953.²⁴ Yet the Church in socialist Bulgaria probably lost more souls through the processes of rural depopulation, coupled with a lack of religious education, than from persecutions of the faithful.

The decades of collaboration with the communist regime led to corruption and eventually to a deep division within the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. From 1992 until recently, two synods and two patriarchs struggled for the Orthodox souls. This crisis of legitimacy paralyzed the Orthodox Church throughout the 1990s, and its sequels are still perceivable at the start of the new millennium.²⁵ These lasting internal quarrels made the Bulgarian Orthodox Church inefficient and increasingly vulnerable to any opening of the religious market. Any Christian or Muslim proselytism (especially by Pentecostals and some new religious movements) was seen as an intrusion into the God-protected realm of Orthodoxy.²⁶ Perhaps this attitude was due to a deeper structural weakness: the state-sponsored functioning of the Church. The constitution of the modern Bulgarian nation-state led to the transformation of Orthodox clergy into state employees. In Bulgaria after 1878, as in Greece after independence (1830), priests became state functionaries and were given monthly salaries. Until World War II they were employed in the frontline of modernization in rural areas, along with teachers and mayors, forming the representative trio of local power. Even under communism, priests remained state functionaries. At the same time, however, they were deprived of their main function, due to the disappearance of the whole system of church rituals.

Implicit and Explicit Knowledge about Bulgarians' "Religiosity"

Implicit social knowledge is a basic feature in our conceptual framework. Related to "common sense," implicit social knowledge is acquired through practice rather than through conscious learning. "Muted and marginalized," as Mattijs van de Port has argued, it rarely surfaces in public discourses, but it "has an enormous power... as a motivational force in the lives of individuals and groups."²⁷ The concept of implicit knowledge helps us understand both the structural autonomy of the social actors in relation to the church, and the issue of religiousness.

Raised in the nineteenth century, the issue of "Bulgarians' religiousness" remained controversial during the interwar period.²⁸ Writers, literary critics, philosophers, historians, and folklorists wondered if "religiousness" or "innate paganism" were more characteristic of Bulgarians than other European peoples. Two responses emerged around 1930, corresponding to two opposing political mindsets. An influential group of right-oriented intellectuals considered Orthodoxy fundamental to the national character, while intellectuals on the left contended that "paganism" had been only superficially transformed by Christianity and that the Church never had total control of the religious life of the average Bulgarian peasant. The latter view was developed in the work of the founder of Bulgarian sociology, Ivan Hadzhijski, who in the postwar period laid the groundwork for the theory of the "natural atheism" of Bulgarians.²⁹ Bulgarian social scientists further developed the theory that natural atheism and a national "commitment to heresy" was a legacy of the Bogomil sect of the tenth century. In 1962 the first generation of Bulgarian sociologists launched a national survey on Bulgarians' religiosity, a vast project that resulted in several books rich with data.³⁰ Aside from the abundant use of modern survey methods, the major achievement of this scholarly work was reducing the conceptual distance between religion and superstition (or magic). The two were lumped together under the derogatory terms of "religious prejudices" and "religious superstitions." Practices and beliefs related to religious institutions and their professionals, and "superstitions" were given the same structural place: for instance, "believing in *hodžas*" and "believing in witches [*vrački*]" fell under the same heading.³¹ Ideologi-

cal manipulation was present even in the description of categories, and the grouping of religion and superstition contributed to the negative image of religion in atheist propaganda.

In light of this intellectual and ideological debate, it is easy to understand the importance of popular religious specialists in defining “religiosity.” The socialist state’s attempt to define Vanga in terms of skills and competences had high stakes: characterizing the nature and limits of her gift was a way to exercise power. In this way, the party-state managed Vanga, attempting to control her influence and the public attitudes toward her. The following biographical sketch and micro-historical study of “Vanga” as a social phenomenon in socialist Bulgaria will show the development of a new “religiosity” that countered the one offered by the state.

Vanga’s Life History and/in the History of Twentieth-Century Bulgaria

Vanga (Evangelia) Pandeva Gushterova was born in 1911 in the Ottoman town of Strumica, which was incorporated into Serbia in 1913 (it is now in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).³² It is difficult to define the “ethnic” or national identity of Vanga’s family. There is evidence of her father’s engagement with the pro-Bulgarian branch of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, but his sense of a local Macedonian identity also seems to have been strong.³³ After her mother’s death, Vanga’s family moved to her father’s native village where, at the age of 13, she was “struck by a whirlwind” (carried by a wind storm into an empty field). At 16 she lost her sight, an event that is usually considered to mark the start of her visionary gift. Vanga was almost 30 when her father died in 1940, and she was at the bottom of the social ladder.

The early manifestations of Vanga’s “gift,” dating back to those years of hardship, conform to what is culturally acceptable for such experiences: seeing and speaking with saints, mostly in dreams. The first publicly recognized act of clairvoyance occurred in April 1941, when she had repeated visions of a “bright man riding a horse” who revealed to her that “terrible things” would shortly occur. This revelation coincided with the outbreak of World War II in Yugoslavia (April 6, 1941).

Vanga had allegedly spent the first weeks of the war in an altered state, uttering before crowds of people the names of those who would return from the front and those who would disappear.³⁴ The “bright rider” was later identified as St. George (other saints also appeared in her visions, such as St. Petka, a female Orthodox saint who enjoys a devotion in the region comparable to the Virgin Mary). Rumors of Vanga’s premonitions spread across Macedonia and attracted people from all over the territory under Bulgarian administration. She was consulted by soldiers of the Bulgarian occupation forces and married one in 1942, following him to the town of Petrić. In 1943 she received a visit from the Bulgarian king Boris III, whose death she allegedly predicted (he died unexpectedly of heart failure on August 28, 1943), as well as the coming of the “Reds” to power.³⁵

In June 1948, political relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were broken and the Bulgarian-Yugoslav frontier was closed. New border regulations made it extremely difficult for people from both Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to access the border town of Petrić.³⁶ Additionally, the Communist Party and police tried to silence Vanga, intimidating her and closing her practice. However, all measures proved ineffective. Under the pressure of people flocking to consult her, Vanga was drawn into visionary crises and had uncontrollable readings of her visitors’ past and future.

Vanga’s activity underwent major changes in the 1960s, when social pressure and police control relaxed. She increasingly attracted educated people and socialist intellectuals from all over Bulgaria and abroad.³⁷ In 1967 she was officially employed by the state in two distinct but interconnected institutions: the municipality of Petrić and the Institute of Suggestology created within the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The former assured Vanga’s material support and received part of her income; the latter was concerned with the scientific justification of Vanga’s activities. A special house for the exercise of her gifts was built in the remote locality of Rupite. The state administration provided discipline by channeling the crowds, maintaining “order,” inscribing names on waiting lists, and, above all, charging a consultation fee. People employed in local or regional state and party structures enjoyed priority and were provided access to Vanga within a day.

In time, the regulation of visits made the share of consultations given to ordinary people smaller, while the priority channels became

wider. By the 1980s, getting to Vanga without connections (*vruzki*) became almost impossible: the waiting lists were established a year in advance, leading to the generalized use of the “second way.” Often a visit to the seer involved a sophisticated patron-client relationship. Even if a séance with Vanga could not be obtained, she was able to use lumps of sugar that had been touched by a petitioner, allowing those with access to consult Vanga on behalf of others.³⁸ In the last years of socialism, showing off one’s relationship with the seer (in published memoirs, among other ways) was a strategy of personal valorization used by intellectuals and fashionable personalities from the capital city. Being Vanga’s “friend” was a sign of cultural sophistication and “spiritual concern.”

By 1989 Vanga was spoken of as “the Bulgarian Pythia.” The early postsocialist period was a time of triumph for her. Immediately after the change in government, she became the focus of mass media attention and remained a hot topic until the end of her life. Readers were attracted by topics such as the first steps of the prophethood, “the truth” about her gift, the predictions that paralleled the hidden history of socialism, and also the “secrets of History.” Still stronger was the public interest in new prophecies, or at least the retrospective reading of old ones. She was solicited to reveal what she had said and “seen” about social crises, political changes, the parties and personalities ruling the state, the future of Bulgaria, the future of the Great Powers, and the ultimate fate of humankind. After decades in which the seer’s activity was constrained (mostly limiting her consultations to personal concerns), the millenarian prophesies came to the fore.

However, Vanga was preoccupied with affirming her membership in the Orthodox world. Shortly after the political change, she announced her decision to build a church in Rupite on a site indicated in her dreams. The church was to be dedicated to Saint Petka “the Bulgarian.”³⁹ After a widely publicized quarrel over the status of “Vanga’s church”—a quarrel that assumed political overtones when it became a source of tension between the socialist-era “Red” Synod and the rival anti-communist Synod—“St. Petka the Bulgarian” was consecrated on October 14, 1994, the patron’s commemorative day, by high representatives of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (the “Red” Synod). The church attracted both pilgrims and the merely curious. Vanga died on August 11, 1996, and was buried near her church. Ru-

pite has since become a major pilgrimage center, as its church is associated with both the tenth-century Orthodox saint and the twentieth-century Bulgarian seer.

The Seer Vanga in the Implicit Knowledge of Bulgarians

Common knowledge regarding Vanga's gift is all but consensual. The highest degree of consensus confirmed her gift to "find missing people" during World War II. From the early 1950s to well into the 1980s, a positive and a negative trend of thinking and talking about the seer could be delineated. According to the negative vision, more characteristic of the first decades of socialism, Vanga was a charlatan who profited from the "superstitious minds" of ordinary folk.⁴⁰ This interpretation recycled well-known discourses of the Church against "sorcerers and witches," using an argument *a contrario* to accuse people who "go to a witch" of political backwardness. Vanga's performances divining her clients' names, their problems, and their personal histories were attributed to a network of "spies" she purportedly relied on for gathering information. In contrast, according to the more positive viewpoint, Vanga was a natural "phenomenon," someone with extra-lucid perception who could see into the past and the future, thus knowing the names and facts of peoples' lives.⁴¹ This gift could be explained by sciences like physiology, psychology, and biophysics, and thus not labeled "superstition." This positive trend began dominating the discussions of Vanga in the 1970s and into the 1980s, when the study of her gift was entrusted to more ambiguous "sciences" like parapsychology. By this time, the "parapsychologist" emerged as a new public figure of knowledge. Halfway between physics, New Age medicine, and mysticism, he or she claimed expertise regarding cosmic and human energies.⁴²

By the late 1980s, the scientific and medical interest in the seer was abandoned for a spiritual one. The result was a return to religious labels for Vanga: "the Prophetess" or "Pythia" replaced the old-fashioned *vračka*. In contrast to traditional Christian benchmarks, new religious identifications were sought in the remote pre-Christian past. The fruit of an elaborate intellectual construct, these pre-Christian identifications were gradually introduced in public discourse.⁴³

However, for all those seeking her help, the religious character of Vanga's expertise was self-evident and rested on common sense. Vanga possessed a range of techniques and gifts for communicating with the supernatural, whether the divine or "other" world, and it was easy for her to shift between them. Fascination with her extraordinary capacities was often accompanied by fear of the world whose existence she unveiled. An indication of this ambiguous relationship is the question people used to ask one another: "Do you believe in Vanga?" Things started changing when a modern institution of knowledge, the Institute of Suggestology (*Institut po Sugestologija*, IS), began to study Vanga's gift. The findings of this study—some 7,000 files on consultations with Vanga now kept in the state archives—offer a database of inestimable value. By analyzing a sample of data, I will now show how the communist regime orchestrated the new meaning of "religion" through "science."

From Seer to Doctor: The Organization of Meaning of the Seer's Practice

Set up in 1966, the Institute of Suggestology had as its main task the study of Vanga's capacities. "Vanga" appears to have been a structuring principle of the institute's activities, which were separated into the domains "suggestology" and "parapsychology." The first heading was applied to methods of learning languages through hypnosis. The second one was a euphemism for a mix of bio-medical study of the mind and monitoring consultations with the seer. The study involved both laboratory simulation of brain functions believed to take part in a prophetic activity and a sort of sociological survey. The institute was also designed to gather background information about the popularity of the seer on the local level; for instance, some surveys drew conclusions about the social background of Vanga's clientele.

This sociological study is of special interest to us. It builds on various types of data: tape-recorded interviews with visitors of Vanga taken immediately after the visit; standardized questionnaires filled in by the interviewers in the presence of the interviewees (the visitors); standardized inquiry cards sent at regular intervals to people who had consulted Vanga, filled in and returned by the interviewees; letters and demands

for prediction and advice, classified according to national criteria (from Bulgarian or Yugoslav citizens, etc.). Another group of documents are letters with “demands for consultation.” The body of the archive was formed between 1967 and 1974, although pieces continued to accumulate until the end of the 1970s, with questionnaire forms and inquiry cards among the most numerous. The most useful for our purpose, however, are the inquiry cards filled in by visitors and sent to the I.S.

The inquiry cards and questionnaires were processed in graphs and tables to find statistical relationships between the degree of Vanga’s “true predictions” and the phases of the moon, as well as the correlation between her “knowledge of past” and the seer’s own biorhythms. They were also processed to find out the sociological profile of Vanga’s clientele. The surveys of 1967–1968 show that nearly 70 percent of the visitors were people with little or no education; the remaining 30 percent were people with higher education (university graduates were automatically classified as “intelligentsia”). The majority of the visitors were middle-aged: just over 78 percent were under 50, and only 22 percent were 50 or older. The overview concluded that “Vanga’s visitors come from all the social strata comprising the intelligentsia, and from all the age cohorts, the youth included.”⁴⁴

The “sociological” study reached two peaks, one in 1967–1968 and one in 1971. My observations here are based on a representative sample of 600 inquiry cards mainly from the first peak. The survey results show that the vast majority of people (around 90 percent) sought health relief. The properly “medical” cases were most numerous. In reporting them, people presented the seer as bridging traditional medical practices and modern biomedicine. Apart from sharing medical stories, the inquiry cards asked visitors to express their sense of the seer. A card was made up of five sets of questions: one question asking for an explanation of the visitor’s goal in visiting/consulting the seer; two questions concerning the visitor’s judgment of her knowledge of the past; and two asking respondents to comment on the realization of Vanga’s predictions in the short and long term.

The cards supposedly used neutral terminology: Vanga was never given a “professional” label. A consultation was described in terms of “knowing/guessing” of the past or the future, whether it was related to health issues, to accidental death, or to disappeared persons. The key word used in the second and third questions was *poznavane*, which

may be translated as “inferred knowledge” or “guessing” or even as “divination.” The key word in the last two questions was “to predict” (*predskazva*). The chosen terms drew a line between recognizing things in the past and predicting the future. This neutral vocabulary avoided religious or emotionally charged terms. Perhaps this led to an extremely ambiguous use of “knowledge”; *poznava* [to “know”] is employed both with regard to the past and the general appreciation of the “truth” in Vanga’s revelations about the visitor’s past, present, and future. This use of “knowledge” opened the possibility for confusion between the different meanings or levels of knowledge/knowing—a confusion that might have been deliberate. A consultation that was systematically reduced to “knowledge of the past/knowledge of the future” could fit both a “religious” and a “scientific” identification of Vanga’s expertise.

The vast majority of respondents acted as expected—they filled in and sent back the questionnaires. The willingness to make a “collaborative effort” with a state institution without apparent constraint is significant in itself. This willingness might be explained by the unusual character of the campaign. The questionnaire contained a sentence specifying that the information would be used “for purely scientific purposes,” which was implicitly associated with bio-medicine.⁴⁵ Insistence on “science” in the questionnaires and the replies was especially marked, showing how the Institute of Suggestology and visitors to Vanga sought to fit within it the broader ideological claim of building the new society on a scientific foundation. For the respondents, reference to science functioned as a strategy of self-defense against possible charges of backwardness, and they willingly adhered to the postulate of “scientific study of Vanga’s gift.”⁴⁶ Moreover, because the domain of science was presented in socialist Bulgaria as an area of positive and trustworthy knowledge, outside or above ideology and independent of the state, respondents perhaps did not view the IS as an institution promoting state policies. It should be kept in mind, however, that the lack of an explicit “constraint” on the completion of questionnaires should not be taken as a complete lack of constraint. People might have felt obliged to respond because they feared that if they didn’t, their names would be associated with the backward people whose “going to *vračka*” was constantly chastised as a “residue from capitalist times.”

The responses attest to the multitude of discourses about the seer. Many people spoke of Vanga in the appropriate socialist code (“com-

rade” or “citizen Vanga Dimitrova”); others simply called her “the seer” [*vračkata*]. The latter term, as well as *gledačka* [soothsayer], was most frequently used to designate Vanga. Poor results from a séance led some people to accuse her of “charlatanism.” The varied responses show the difficulty that people had in making their experiences fit into the categories required by the questionnaire. Most problematic was the use of the two basic formulations: *poznavane* [knowledge/guess, divination] and *predskazvane* [prediction]. Some respondents described features of this interview with Vanga—such as her knowledge of the names of dead relatives or a doctor, or her diagnoses of a medical problem—as “knowledge of things past,” while others described the same things as “prediction.”⁴⁷ Many responses showed a gap between the consultants’ feelings about Vanga and their personal experiences in consulting her, and the categories in which they had to describe those feelings and experiences. Fearing possible misunderstanding, some added a separate sheet to explain the motivations for their visit or to describe the séance in their own words.

The responses written on the inquiry cards help in understanding the “common-sense expectation” against which people projected their real experiences. Moreover, they show the role of implicit knowledge in shaping visitors’ horizons of expectations.⁴⁸ This implicit knowledge included the way people behaved with the seer: the appreciation that the quality of the séance depended on Vanga’s “freshness” (“She doesn’t talk much if she is tired, just a few minutes, and she puts you out the door”); the overnight queuing in order to be among the first in line; tips on how to recognize if she was in a good or bad mood (“You can’t be nervous—if she gets angry, she won’t tell you anything”); and humility (“People can wait up to two weeks; you have to be patient”). As a whole, this implicit knowledge attested to the large-scale effort to organize the myriad of personal experiences with the seer into a politically safe field of experience, correlating to an ideologically secure horizon of expectation.

Looking at the inquiry cards, one can say that Vanga acted in conformity with people’s expectations, dispensing advice about doctors as well as herbal medicine, thermal cures, and traditional healing methods. The tendency was markedly towards the “bio-medicalization” of the seer’s “gift,” which was realized in a variety of ways: by relaying medical knowledge through appropriate language and by “diagnosing”

with a medical vocabulary; by knowing doctors by name; by skillfully combining the various means of healing and creating a larger framework within which traditional techniques would complement bio-medicine. All this helps explain Vanga's success in socialist Bulgaria: the *vračka* from Petrić acted as a linchpin between traditional and modern systems of healing and, more generally speaking, between a religious and a secular plane of "salvation."⁴⁹ Switching between prophecy and healing was no problem for the seer, since both were intertwined in a traditional mental world. The movement between systems of diagnosing and healing had a parallel in—and was facilitated by—the *de facto* functioning of different value systems, under the cover of an allegedly unique "socialist morality." The materialist world view was incessantly challenged by more idealistic, or fatalistic, traditional mentalities and ways of thinking about the world. But both the visionary activity and the healing practices of the *vračka* were based on the practical use of—and *implicit knowledge* about—the pragmatic ways and rules of the everyday world of the Balkan society that was becoming "socialist Bulgaria." Here, as well as in the *cultural intimacy* that Vanga shared with her "clients" and "patients," lay Vanga's effective power.⁵⁰ One can suggest that, in dealing with her visitors' health and existential problems, Vanga bridged the gap between the still-inadequate or failing institutions of medicine and care, and the former provider of certainty in the world, that the denigrated religious institutions and religious specialists banned from people's lives. This ultimately contributed to her effectiveness and long-term influence within Bulgarian society.

Conclusion

The developments discussed here raise more questions than answers. The questionnaires and inquiry cards analyzed were products of the effort of a socialist state agency to channel "religion" into "medicine." They translated people's hardships and sufferings into a distant and apparently neutral language fitted to the claim, typical for socialism, that social practice could be organized according to a "scientific background." Questionnaires are not just a list of questions: they organize meaningful experience into a new framework and enforce new categories upon people's minds. The questionnaires shaped people's implic-

it knowledge about Vanga, which was subsequently channeled to the realm of formalized discourses. Thus “science” helped to translate the clairvoyant’s traditional religious expertise into a more rationalistic language, transferring it from a discredited religion to the field of medicine and the realm of “knowledge,” a synonym of “progress.” In turn, the ambiguous understanding of knowledge made possible the blurring of the boundary between rational and scientific knowledge on the one hand, and inspired or mystic knowledge on the other. In time, inspired knowledge and techniques of divination came to be labeled “spirituality.” Such a manipulation was successfully applied to “folk” or popular religious specialists, those who stayed outside the church but were firmly rooted in their local societies and enjoyed high popularity. The sophisticated management system of the seer Vanga, as seen through the IS inquiry cards, marked the peak of the effort by high circles of the Party and the socialist intelligentsia to reframe religious expertise. The suggested conclusion is that the remaking of religion under socialism amounted to taking it outside the ecclesiastic institutions, giving it a rational face, and putting it into a “scientific” mold, thereby dissolving “religiosity” into the blurred “magical-religious-medical” field.

The last formulation helps us understand the continuing importance of Vanga in the postsocialist religious revival. Keeping in mind the instances of local religious revival with which this paper started, it is worth noting how easily the famous seer and healer endowed with the aura of alternative medicines switched back to “religion” in the traditional sense of this word.⁵¹ Under communism, she exemplified the re-emergence, in modern clothes, of a popular religiosity that was denigrated in the dominant discourses but *de facto* tolerated. Folk healers and village religious experts had no problem adapting their skills and vocabulary to their clients’ new way of talking and to the overall ideological framework that favored science at the expense of religion. For the multiple actors of local religious revivals throughout post-socialist Bulgaria, Vanga’s association with the realm of “spirituality” made her suitable for translating their ideas and practices of religiosity into the model proposed by the Orthodox Church and its clergy. Adding old and new religious meanings to an expertise strongly connoted with “gift” (and therefore natural charisma), Vanga provided a suitable model for legitimatizing oneself to all those emerging religious entrepreneurs. Vanga’s life course and achievements were otherwise com-

pulling to the local lay actors who had never distinguished themselves in the struggle against communism; following her example, they could successfully adjust their previous, “socialist” identities to fit their new, “postsocialist” identities. I hope that by shedding light on the multiple pressures and agencies that made for the re-shaping of a traditional seer into a modern healer under socialism, and for the transformation of the healer/doctor back to a religious entrepreneur, the essay helps us understand the success of Vanga and her successors in postsocialism.

NOTES

- 1 Caroline Humphrey, *Karl Marx Collective: Economy, Society and Religion in a Siberian Collective Farm* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991); and Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
- 2 See Tamara Dragadze, “The Domestication of Religion under Soviet Communism,” in Chris M. Hann, ed., *Socialism: Ideals, Ideologies, and Local Practice* (London: Routledge, 1993), 148–156.
- 3 Gail Klingman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Politics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988).
- 4 See Dragadze, “The Domestication of Religion under Soviet Communism,” 152; and Gerald W. Creed, “Economic Crisis and Ritual Decline in Eastern Europe,” in Chris M. Hann, ed., *Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia* (London: Routledge, 2002), 57–73.
- 5 See Thomas Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society* (New York: Macmillan, 1967); Daniele Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000); and Albert Piette, *La religion de près: L'activité religieuse en train de se faire* (Paris: Métailié, 1999).
- 6 Charles Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
- 7 Here, “secularization” is understood in institutional and legal terms: the constitutional separation of state and Church (with the law of December 4, 1947); the banning of religion from public schools, the state monopoly on charity; and the establishment of mandatory civil weddings. See Daniela Kalkandzhieva, *Balgarskata Pravoslavna Cărkva i dărzhavata, 1944–1953* (Sofia: Albatros, 1997), 72–144.
- 8 Deema Kaneff, “Why People Don't Die Naturally Any More: Changing Relations between ‘the Individual’ and ‘the State’ in Postsocialist Bulgaria,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2002): 89–105; Galia

- Valtchinova, "From Postsocialist Religious Revival to Socialist Seer and Vice Versa: The Remaking of Religion in Postsocialist Bulgaria," Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Working Paper No. 98 (Halle/Saale, 2007).
- 9 Here the phrase "Orthodox Bulgaria" denotes a) the Eastern Orthodox Church, recognized as the "traditional" confession in Bulgaria and enjoying state support; b) the local communities whose population identify themselves as Orthodox Christians or say they are Christian *because* they are Bulgarian; and c) the actors of religious life in Bulgaria who see themselves as "truly Orthodox."
 - 10 For other examples, see Valtchinova, "From Postsocialist Religious Revival to Socialist Seer and Vice Versa," 5–7, 17–18. For the use of the term of "religious entrepreneur," see William A. Christian, Jr., *Visionaries: The Spanish Republic and the Reign of Christ* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
 - 11 On Vanga and the various translations of *vračka* [soothsayer; fortune teller, healer; holy woman], see Ilia Iliev, "The Social Construction of a Sainly Woman in Bulgaria," in Adrianne Rubeli and Nina Vucenik, eds., *A Captured Moment in Time: WM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences 10* (Vienna, 2000), <http://www.iwm.at/publ-jvc/jc-10-03.pdf> (accessed June 11, 2007). For Vanga's fame in the late 1960s, see Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder, *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain* (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), 265, where they write, "Vanga finds missing people, helps solve crimes, diagnoses disease, and reads the past. But her greatest gift is prophecy... she foretells the future with astonishing accuracy."
 - 12 See Dragadze, "The Domestication of Religion under Soviet Communism," 149–150.
 - 13 Victor Turner wrote that a "processes of bureaucratization, involving rationality in decision making, relative impersonality in social relations, routinization of tasks, and a hierarchy of authority and function, have produced a large number of types, grades, and ranks of religious specialists in all the major religious systems." See Turner, "Religious Specialists," in Arthur C. Lehmann and James E. Myers, eds., *Magic, Witchcraft and Religion: An Anthropological Study of the Supernatural* (Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, 1985), 78–85.
 - 14 See Ernest Gellner, "Doctor and Saint," in Akbar S. Ahmet and David M. Hart, eds., *Islam in Tribal Societies from Atlas to the Indus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 21–38.
 - 15 For the former assertion, see Eva Blum and Richard H. Blum, *Health and Healing in Rural Greece* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965). For the latter assertion, see Loring Danforth, *Firewalking and Religious Healing: The Anastenaria in Greece and the American Firewalking Movement* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1989), especially 69–83.
 - 16 Pierre Bourdieu, "Genèse et structure du champ religieux," *Revue française de sociologie* 12, no. 3 (1971): 298–306.

- 17 See Jean-Pierre Albert, *Le sang et le Ciel: Les saintes mystiques dans le monde chrétien* (Paris: Aubier, 1997), chapter 2, especially 78–84. This theme is further developed in “Hérétiques, déviants, bricoleurs. Peut-on être un bon croyant?” *L’Homme* 173 (2005): 75–96.
- 18 Pierre Bourdieu, “Le champ religieux dans le champ de manipulation symbolique,” in *Les nouveaux clercs: Prêtres, pasteurs et spécialistes des relations humaines et de la santé* (Geneva: Labor & Fides, 1985), 255–261; and “La dissolution du religieux,” in *Choses dites* (Paris: Minuit, 1987), 117–123. See critique and further elaboration in Erwan Dianteill, “Pierre Bourdieu et la religion: synthèse critique d’une synthèse critique,” *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions* 118 (November 14, 2005), <http://assr.revues.org/document1590.html> (accessed June 13, 2007), 5–19.
- 19 See Taylor, *Varieties of Religion Today*, 106–107.
- 20 See Peter F. Sugar, “The Historical Role of Religious Institutions in Eastern Europe and Their Place in the Communist Party-State,” in Pedro Ramet, ed., *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 42–58.
- 21 Sociologists have contended that the forced secularization under communism should not be compared to “normal” secularization in other societies. See, for instance, Miklós Tomka, “Secularization or Anomy? Interpreting Religious Change in Communist Societies,” *Social Compass* 38, no. 1 (1989): 93–102. When examined in their respective contexts, however, the processes of secularization in France (preceding and following the Law of 1905), or in Spain (under the Republic, 1931–1936) were no less “revolutionary” breakthroughs than those pursued in the communist states.
- 22 For Bulgaria, see Janice Broun, “The Bulgarian Orthodox Church: The Continuing Schism and the Religious, Social and Political Environment,” *Religion, State & Society* 32, no. 3 (2004): 209–245; Broun, “The Schism in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church,” *Religion, State & Society* 21, no. 2 (1993): 207–220; Spas T. Raikin, “The Bulgarian Orthodox Church,” in Pedro Ramet, ed., *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), 160–182; and Raikin, “Nationalism and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church,” *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, 352–377. For Romania, see Olivier Gillet, *Religion et nationalisme: L’idéologie de l’Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine sous le régime communiste*, (Brussels: Edition de l’Université de Bruxelles, 1997); and Verdery, *Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, 55–93.
- 23 See Daniela Kalkandzhieva, “Balgarskata Pravoslavna Cărkva i novijat Zakon za veroizpovedanijata,” in Ina Merdzhanova, ed., *Religija i politika na Balkanite* (Silistra: Demos, 2004), 148–181.
The principle of autocephaly almost automatically led to “phyletism”: see Philip Walters, “Notes on Autocephaly and Phyletism,” *Religion, State & Society* 30, no. 4 (2002): 357–364.
- 24 See Kalkandzhieva, *Balgarskata Pravoslavna Cărkva i dărzhavata*, 283–287.

- 25 See Broun, "Schism" and "The Bulgarian Orthodox Church"; and Kalkandzhieva, "Balgarskata Pravoslavna Cărkva," 161–165.
- 26 This surfaced in the debate surrounding the new denominations act. See Kalkandzhieva, "Balgarskata Pravoslavna Cărkva," 165–172. On the incapacity of the Orthodox Church to accept the religious market, see Verdery, *Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, 82.
- 27 Mattijs van de Port, *Gypsies, Wars & Other Instances of the Wild: Civilization and its Discontents in a Serbian Town* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998), 97, 100.
- 28 See Rumen Daskalov and Ivan Elenkov, eds., *Zashto sme takiva? V tărsene na balgarskata kulturna identichnost* (Sofia: Svetlostroi, 1994); and Elenkov, "Rasovite belezi na bălgarskoto: v tărsene na bălgarskata kulturna identichnost mezhdu dve svetovni vojni," in A Natev, ed., *Aneignung und Emanzipation* (Sofia: The Volkswagen Foundation, 1997), 305–318; and Aleksandăr Kiossev, "The Debate about the Problematic Bulgarian: A View on the Pluralism of the National Ideologies in Bulgaria in the Interwar Period," in Ivo Banac and Katherine Verdery, eds., *National Character and National Ideology in Interwar Eastern Europe* (New Haven, CT: Routledge University Press, 1995), 198–223.
- 29 Ivan Hadzhijski, *Izbrani săchinenija v tri toma* (Sofia: Impresum, 2002).
- 30 Especially Zhivko Oshavkov, ed., *Procesăt na otniraneto na religijata v Bălgarija. Sociologicesko prouchvane*, (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Publishing House, 1970); and Mincho Draganov, *Religioznata psihika na bălgarite* (Sofia: Partizdat, 1968). See also Günther Lüschen, et al., "Family, Ritual and Secularization: A Cross-National Study Conducted in Bulgaria, Finland, Germany and Ireland," *Social Compass* 19, no. 4 (1972): 519–536.
- 31 See Oshavkov, *Procesăt na otniraneto na religijata v Bălgarija*, 265–278.
- 32 Following the two Balkan wars (1912–1913), the Ottoman province of Macedonia was divided among Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria. The part where Strumica was located, then called "Southern Serbia," remained an integral part of Serbia during the "first Yugoslavia" (1918–1941). In 1944 Strumica became part of the Republic of Macedonia that was created out of this Serbian Macedonia in the framework of the new (Tito's) Federative Yugoslavia. It should be remembered that a separate Macedonian identity was almost nonexistent at the end of World War I and was still rudimentary in the interwar period. See Keith Brown, *The Past in Question: Modern Macedonia and the Uncertainties of Nation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 41–44.
- 33 The authoritative but somewhat hagiographical biography of Vanga, written by her niece, Krasimira Stoyanova, is *Vanga* (Sofia: Balgarski Pisatel, 1989). The official biographies and memoirs on which this overview is based evade the issue of the "ethnic" or national identity of Vanga and her family.
- 34 Stoyanova, *Vanga*, 51–54.

- 35 See Stoyanova, *Vanga*, 54–55; Zheni Kostadinova, *Prorochestvata na Vanga* (Sofia: Trud, 1997), 12. This prophecy had circulated widely during socialism.
- 36 Petrić is located near the triple border shared by Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Greece. By the 1960s, each country became representative of a separate “world” in the global division of the Cold War. This location of the town at the meeting point of two “alien worlds” (in fact, Tito’s Yugoslavia was unofficially assimilated to the “capitalist world”) only partly explains the harsh measures. Another reason might be found in the recent history of the Petrić area, which was a stronghold of the terrorist wing of IMRO in the interwar period, as well as to the problem of a separate Macedonian identity, initially enforced upon the whole population of the Blagoevgrad administrative region (1946–1948), subsequently denied and repressed by the Bulgarian communist regime.
- 37 Ostrander and Schroeder, *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain*, 279.
- 38 According to general opinion, this practice stimulated her clairvoyance. For numerous examples of such “hidden séances,” see Kostadinova, *Prorochestvata na Vanga*.
- 39 On the “nationalization” of the cult of St. Petka (Paraskevi) of Epivata, a holy ascetic and recluse from the early tenth century, see Valtchinova, “‘Visages nationaux’ du culte de sainte Parascève/Petka d’Epivatos: une approche historico-anthropologique,” *Etudes Balkaniques* 2 (2000): 96–111. The epithet “Bulgarian” is an innovation.
- 40 Zhivko Oshavkov, *Protsest na preodoliavaneto na religiata v Bulgariia* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1968), 131–132, 284.
- 41 Most explicitly in Velichko Dobriyanov, *Fenomenat Vanga* (Sofia: Sofia University St. Kliment Okhridski Publisher, 1995). This sociologist coined the explanation of “intra-temporal telepathy.”
- 42 As, for instance, the self-proclaimed parapsychologist and specialist of occult sciences Kubrat Tomov, former adviser of Ljudmila Zhivkova (daughter of Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov). Zhivkova’s infatuation with Eastern religious doctrines and the occult was an open secret among Bulgarians. See I.N. Atanasova, “Ljudmila Zhivkova and the Paradox of Identity and Ideology in Communist Bulgaria,” *East European Politics and Societies* 18, no. 2 (2004): 287. Trends towards mysticism among intellectuals were complementary to Bulgarian nationalism and an important element of the spiritual climate before 1989.
- 43 See Valtchinova, “Vanga, la ‘Pythie bulgare’: idées et usages de l’Antiquité en Bulgarie socialiste,” *Dialogues d’Histoire Ancienne* 31, no. 1 (2004): 93–127, where I show the implications of historians, social scientists, and “the artistic intelligentsia” in general participating in this enterprise.
- 44 The statistics are in *State Archives of Bulgaria* [hereafter *SAB*], f. 904-II, nos. 378, 379; for the quote see no. 379, p. 5.
- 45 In many inquiry cards, the respondent asks the “Institute” to arrange for another meeting with Vanga (no. 293, pp. 25, 28, 53), or a meeting with a

medical doctor (*SAB*, f. 904-II, no. 293, pp. 30, 53; no. 301, pp. 38–9, 50; no. 344, p. 117).

- 46 I.e. *SAB*, f. 904-II, no. 301, pp. 20–1: “Comrades, we went to Vanga because people said she was able to orient [the word used here is ‘predict to’] patients to the best medical doctors. I believe in science. But there are enigmas that must be studied. The goal of our visit to Vanga was relief from illness.” Perhaps the same visitor was not satisfied with the séance because Vanga “neither sent us to a [bio-medical] doctor, nor prescribed us herbal medicine.”
- 47 “Prediction” is particularly difficult to define: According to a woman, Vanga “predicted” that her dead brother “asked about my son, recently murdered by his mad brother” (file 301, p. 72). Here the “prediction” is clearly oriented to past events, but also implies premonition. For the IS “prediction” means projecting into the future.
- 48 Here “[field of] experience” and “horizon of expectation” are used according to Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1985), especially 288.
- 49 The use of “salvation” here intentionally blurs the strictly religious sense of the term to cover ideology as well. I borrow this broad understanding from Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- 50 Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 1997), 3. Here Herzfeld defines cultural intimacy as “those aspects of cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality, the familiarity with the bases of power.”
- 51 For the identification of Vanga with alternative medicines and New Age-inspired movements in postsocialism, see Valtchinova, “From Postsocialist Revival to Socialist Seer and Vice Versa,” 18–21.

Constructing Peace in the GDR

*Conscientious Objection and Compromise among East German Christians, 1962–1989**

DAVID DOELLINGER

In September 1964 a young East German conscientious objector named Wolfgang Stadthaus began an eighteen-month tour of unarmed military service within the National Peoples Army (*Nationale Volksarmee*; hereafter NVA). Stadthaus, like the other 219 men who chose to serve in the military's newly created construction units (*Baueinheiten*) that year, participated in a compromise agreement between the state, church, and society. Stadthaus's experience as a construction soldier (*Bausoldat*) and his commitment to pacifism in civilian life afterwards run counter to the traditional narrative of East German history. Scholarship on the German Democratic Republic has typically emphasized the militarized authoritarian state's success in secularizing society and preventing the formation of reform movements within the ruling Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*; hereafter SED) and organized dissident movements outside it.¹ But during the quarter-century between 1964 and the fall of communism, many former *Bausoldaten*, like Stadthaus, challenged the boundary of state power in the GDR with the support of the Lutheran Church and fellow Christians. An examination of the *Bausoldaten* reveals limits to the East German government's secularization policies and its authoritarian power, as the state was compelled to compromise with pacifists supported by the Lutheran Church. The *Bausoldaten* activities also highlight the Christian influence on dissent in the GDR and its connection to anti-militarization.² Indeed, Christian conscientious objectors in the GDR appear to have been motivated more by a rejection of the state's militarization policies than a defense of the faith against secularization or communism.

The first generation of conscientious objectors who served as *Bausoldaten* after the construction units became a legal alternative to mili-

tary service in 1964 created a community that rejected the party-state's efforts to militarize society and promote a conception of peace that prioritized armaments and military preparedness. This paper examines the activities of a small cohort of this generation in East Berlin. From 1964 to 1968, these construction soldiers, with the support of some Lutheran theologians and clergy, formulated an alternative conception of peace—one that could be attained through disarmament, strengthened social ties within the GDR, and Christian responsibility. Their vision of peace, grounded on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, directly challenged the SED's position and went beyond the Church hierarchy's more moderate criticism of state policies. They laid the foundation for a broader social movement independent of state control, whose popularity and range of activities increased in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Theme of Peace and Church–State Relations in the GDR

The context of the first generation of *Bausoldaten* was shaped by theological debates that had influenced German Protestantism since the 1930s. This theology addressed notions of Christian responsibility and the church's relationship to the state. The Cold War context put competing conceptualizations of "peace" at the center of the relationship between church and state and transformed peace into a social issue in East German society. As such, pacifist and oppositional activities retained a religious orientation in East Germany until the 1980s, even after human rights had become the central theme of oppositional activism elsewhere in the Soviet bloc. As Katharina Kunter's article in this volume explains, human rights as a concept was too secular and individualistic for believers to accept in the GDR until after the 1983 Conciliar Process, in which opposition and dissent in the GDR became increasingly secularized.

The theme of peace became a central component of the party-state's discourse in East Germany as well as that of its opponents. As Cory Ross argues, when East German remilitarization and popular resistance to the state's policies began in the early 1950s, both were grounded in appeals to peace, rejection of Nazism, fear of another world war, and worries about the Cold War division of Europe and

Germany. From the state's perspective, war and militarism were integral to capitalism. Anti-Western propaganda in the late 1940s and early 1950s decried the capitalist system as militaristic and fascist, and heralded socialism and the military strength of the socialist allies as the key to future peace. In contrast to the state's conception of peace through military preparedness, many East Germans rejected militarization, citing the loss of family members during World War II and expressing fear that Germans would fight fellow Germans in another world war. When the state began recruiting volunteers in 1952 for military units in response to escalating Cold War tensions, the SED struggled to win popular support for remilitarization.³ Ross notes that, ironically, many of the pacifist attitudes that East Germans expressed after 1952 suggest that the SED's own anti-fascist and anti-militarist propaganda had been successful.⁴ In 1962 the East German state resorted to compulsory service in order to man its military, a step made possible only after the construction of the Berlin Wall kept young men from avoiding their obligation by fleeing to the West.

The Lutheran Church's relationship to the East German government and willingness to engage the state on issues related to peace reflected continuities with theological positions that had emerged in response to Nazism in the 1930s. Since the sixteenth century, the Church had followed Martin Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms, which argued that Christians should submit to the authority of the state. This policy of submission remained in place until Swiss theologian Karl Barth, responding to the rise of Nazism, rejected it in favor of a new position articulated in the 1934 Barmen Declaration, that Christians had an obligation to actively resist a state that acted against the will of God. This new theology inspired the founding of the Confessing Church, one of the most prominent expressions of resistance to Nazism from 1934 to 1945. While former members of the Confessing Church brought a degree of legitimacy to the reconstructed Lutheran administration after 1945, individual clergy held varied positions regarding the Lutheran Church's or any Christian's relationship to the state.⁵ In other words, clergy at all levels of the Church hierarchy in East Germany differed in their willingness to support activities or views of peace that diverged from the state's position. The Lutheran Church officially supported pacifism after 1952, but this support depended largely on the particular interests of individual bishops, pas-

tors, and congregations. Scholarship on the Lutheran Church in the GDR has detailed its relative autonomy, though its self-identification as a "Church in Socialism" in the 1970s led many to question whether it had become too close to the state.

The *Bausoldat* activism that began in the mid-1960s reveals much about the Lutheran Church's relationship to the state and its early, tentative support of social initiatives that did not conform to the state's position. Despite the SED's efforts to secularize East German society, the Lutheran Church retained much of its autonomy after the creation of the GDR. The Lutheran Church, formally the Evangelical Church of Germany until 1969, was a decentralized, Germany-wide institution organized into regional/territorial churches (*Landeskirchen*). Eight of its *Landeskirchen* were located in the GDR.⁶ The *Landeskirchen* were led by bishops, who coordinated their individual ministries through regular meetings of the Conference of Evangelical Church Leaders. Tensions certainly shaped the church-state relationship in the GDR. The Lutheran Church's special position often led the state to try to co-opt or contest the Church's position. For example, one of the state's secularization policies in 1954 created a state youth consecration program (*Jugendweihe*) in which young people, in lieu of attending the church's afternoon religious confirmation classes, instead confirmed their commitment to building socialism. At the same time, however, church activities also confounded state policies. As Ross argues, the state's efforts to recruit volunteers for the military were complicated by its simultaneous outlawing of Christian youth associations (*Junge Gemeinden*) in 1952. The *Junge Gemeinden* had become havens for pacifists, making it harder for the state to actually break up these Christian associations.⁷ In other words, pacifism strengthened resistance in some churches to the government's secularizing policies, though the primary concern of these Christians appears to be the preservation of a forum for anti-militarization rather than anti-state resistance.

The Construction Soldier Compromise

On September 7, 1964, the East German government issued a decree permitting young men to fulfill their obligatory military duty without carrying a weapon by serving in construction units within the NVA.⁸ In

November 1964, the first 220 conscripts began their military service as construction soldiers.⁹ The *Bausoldaten* served the same length of service (eighteen months) as regular draftees, received the same pay, lived in military barracks, and, with the exception of the symbol of a spade on their epaulettes, wore military uniforms similar to those of armed recruits.¹⁰ The government's decree defined the tasks to be carried out by these construction soldiers:

- a) assistance in the construction of street and traffic structures, as well as the development of defensive and other military facilities;
- b) the disposal of equipment damaged during exercises;
- c) deployment at times of catastrophe.

During their training, *Bausoldaten* received political indoctrination along with instruction in military regulations, defense skills, and first aid. Though they participated in military physical drills, they did not carry any weapons.¹¹

The 1964 decree provided a legal means for conscientious objectors to avoid armed military service. With this decree, the GDR became the only Warsaw Pact country to offer conscientious objectors a legal alternative to armed military service.¹² While all Soviet bloc states emphasized a commitment to peace, the relatively recent history of Nazi aggression in German history appears to have put an additional burden on the GDR to be able to emphasize a commitment to pacifism through an option of unarmed military service.¹³ *Bausoldat* service in the GDR, unlike forced labor service for politically suspect individuals elsewhere in the Soviet bloc, was a voluntary option available to young men. However, the state did little to publicize the possibility of unarmed military service. Recruits had to declare before their district draft board the specific grounds for selecting unarmed military service. The draft board had the power to reject or accept this request, sometimes denying that the option of unarmed service really existed.¹⁴ From 1964 to 1973, the NVA stationed the *Bausoldaten* in four large concentrations throughout the GDR: Bärenstein, near Karl-Marx-Stadt; Saßnitz, with a field camp at Stralsund-Därholm in the Rostock region; and Garz/Rügen and Prenzlau, both in the Neubrandenburg region. After 1973, the NVA placed the construction soldiers in smaller

units in a greater number of stationing points throughout the GDR.¹⁵ Young men who succeeded in joining *Bausoldat* units returned to civilian life with black marks on their records for their conscientious objection and often faced educational and occupational difficulties. Conscientious objectors who refused to serve in the regular armed units and who refused to accept the compromise option of serving as *Bausoldaten* were known as “total resisters” and usually served a prison sentence. Approximately 30,000 young men served as construction soldiers between 1964 and 1989.¹⁶ Under the circumstances, this number is significant. As a percentage of total conscripts, an estimated 1 to 1.5 percent of eligible conscripts per year pursued unarmed service.¹⁷

Available evidence indicates that public pressure and the advocacy of a Lutheran bishop persuaded the state to offer an alternative to armed military service. Following the introduction of compulsory military service in 1962, 1,200 to 2,000 young men, including about 200 theology students, pastors, and church employees, immediately declared their refusal to be conscripted.¹⁸ The 1964 decree that introduced the terms of unarmed military service was a product of subsequent negotiations between Bishop Mitzenheim of Thuringia and Walter Ulbricht.¹⁹ According to the decree, the state conceded that religious belief was a basis for refusing armed military service.²⁰ As a product of popular pressure from Christians and the initiative of an individual East German bishop, the origins of the 1964 decree appeared to be located outside of a collectively adopted position of the formal Church hierarchy.

The first generation of *Bausoldaten* were predominantly Lutheran and rejected armed military service on religious grounds. Bernd Eisenfeld, a first-generation construction soldier, surveyed 360 former *Bausoldaten* who had served from 1964 to 1973. Seventy of his respondents had served in the first cohort, from November 1, 1964, to April 30, 1966. Of these, 65 percent were Lutheran, 8 percent Free/Reformed, 18 percent Seventh Day Adventists, and 9 percent Jehovah’s Witnesses. When asked about their motivation to join the construction units, 71 percent cited primarily religious motives; 17 percent had Christian humanistic motives; 10 percent had humanistic as well as oppositional (but not religious) motives; and 2 percent had other (unspecified, non-religious) motives.²¹

Anecdotal evidence suggests that young men opting for this alternative service shared at least one of two qualities until 1989. First, they

already had a connection to a church or church-related organization. Many conscientious objectors were seminary students; in fact, it was seminary students who were most vocally opposed to the introduction of obligatory military service in 1962. Also, because the state did little to publicize the option of unarmed service, the churches, and particularly their youth organizations, became the primary means for promoting this mechanism. As such, young men with close ties to clergy or who were involved in the Lutheran Church's young men's association (*Jungmännerwerk*) were more likely to learn about conscientious objection and pursue unarmed military service.²² This connection could exist in any region, as well as in urban and rural settings. The Church's connection to the *Bausoldaten* strengthened over time as former construction soldiers found that they could only pursue careers as clergy or other church-related jobs.²³ Second, their conscientious objection also appears to have been shaped by some personal connection to or concern over the destructiveness of World War II. For example, Heinz Bächer, who completed his *Bausoldat* service in 1979, explained that he had grown up with a father who had lost an arm during the war. His objection to military service was shaped by his personal experience of seeing the human and social cost of warfare in his family.²⁴

Many recruits in the first generation expressed criticism about the military nature of unarmed service during their tours. One of the earliest conflicts focused on the wording of the oath of allegiance that the 1964 decree required of all *Bausoldaten*. The first article of the oath reads: "I vow: to always loyally serve the German Democratic Republic, my fatherland, and to use my strength for the heightening of its defense preparedness." In the second article, *Bausoldaten* vowed to defend the NVA and its allies (the armies of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact) against all enemies and to achieve victory.²⁵ The text of the oath illustrates the concessional nature of *Bausoldat* service by emphasizing that construction soldiers would still be strengthening the GDR's defensive capabilities and were committed to the victory of socialism against enemies.²⁶ The strongest resistance to the oath came from the *Bausoldaten* stationed at Prenzlau, who had been divided into two separate units. In the first unit (Prenzlau I), most of the *Bausoldaten* took the oath, but a few refused. Helmut Wolff, who would later be active in Leipzig's regional group of former construction soldiers, belonged to this unit and refused to take the oath. He served a six-

month prison sentence in addition to his eighteen months of *Bausoldat* service. At Prenzlau II, the entire unit refused to take the oath. Wolfgang Stadthaus, who was stationed at Prenzlau II, explained that despite visits to the unit by Admiral Verner (who was in charge of the NVA's political education) and other high-ranking military commanders, the entire unit completed their *Bausoldat* service without taking the oath and without receiving prison sentences.²⁷

The oath became one of the most controversial aspects of unarmed service because it required construction soldiers to make a public statement that contradicted fundamental Christian beliefs, namely, advocating the use of violence against enemies. Though the 1964 decree recognized religious belief as grounds for conscientious objection, the oath's clear emphasis on militarization dispelled any illusion that the state respected Christian theology as grounds for unarmed service. The text of the oath asserted that the victory of socialism would be assured through military means. Church leaders investigated the compromising nature of this oath, and in 1965 a committee reported: "The alternative military service in the construction units is not respected by many [Christians] as a satisfactory solution to their conscientious objection against military service." The report recognized that several *Bausoldaten* refused to take the oath owing to their Christian principles. Observing that three-quarters of the 220 *Bausoldaten* in 1964 were Lutheran, the committee pointed to the oath as an example of one of many ways that Christians were forced to compromise their beliefs on a daily basis.²⁸ In 1966 the chair of the Conference of Lutheran Church leaders addressed these issues with the state secretary for church questions, who argued that the security of the state would be weakened by any compromise regarding the alternative military service.²⁹ The Church leadership could not persuade the state to change the language of the oath.

As the first *Bausoldaten* completed their service, they issued several public appeals calling for broader peace work and criticizing the shortcomings of their service. The first of these statements was issued on March 2, 1966, when a group identifying itself as a "brotherly circle of Prenzlau *Bausoldaten*" issued a two-page appeal addressed "To All Christians." The authors asked Christians to work for the preservation of peace in response to the increased militarization of East German

society: "We, as young conscientious objectors, have refused armed service due to our understanding and confession of the Good News of Jesus Christ. We are attempting to follow the message of peace of our Lord. We must always bear in mind that a third world war would lead to the self-destruction of all humanity." The appeal asked parents not to buy military toys for their children. It also encouraged women and young girls to refuse to participate in shooting and other military-like exercises in their training for the Red Cross, and it charged draftees to ask themselves whether they, as Christians, could accept the military's oath of allegiance.³⁰ Wolfgang Stadthaus explained that the unsigned appeal, written at the very end of the first cohort's *Bausoldat* service, was a bit conspiratorial. It was formulated and written by Christfried Berger, a fellow construction soldier and friend at Prenzlau II, and distributed through the Church's youth organization. In May 1966, a group of construction soldiers who had just completed their service at Garz issued a report on the shortcomings of the 1964 decree. They were particularly critical of the fact that much of their service contributed to the development of military projects. They sent copies of their report to several universities, including Humboldt University in East Berlin and Karl Marx University in Leipzig.³¹

By the spring of 1966, when this first cohort of *Bausoldaten* completed its service, many themes that would be characteristic of subsequent generations of construction soldiers were already established. Though small in number, the first generation of *Bausoldaten* had been predominantly Christian. As Christians, they had been unable to accept some requirements of the compromise service (e.g., the language of the oath, and the military nature of the service). In particular, several *Bausoldaten* resisted conforming to the state's oath requirement. But the letters from soldiers at Prenzlau and Garz demonstrated an active commitment to oppose militarization in other aspects of East German society. While later construction soldiers faced stiff penalties for refusing the oath—and fewer refused to take it—the activism and resistance to militarization continued to define *Bausoldat* service, in both the barracks and the civilian lives of former *Bausoldaten*. Yet even though the former construction soldiers cited a Christian responsibility to act against militarization in the GDR, their public appeals did not challenge the SED's political authority or its secularizing policies.

Christian Responsibility to Oppose Militarization at Home and Abroad

In May 1966, almost immediately after completing their tour, a small group of first-generation *Bausoldaten* began holding monthly meetings in a private apartment in East Berlin. This small group of construction soldiers had served at Prenzlau II and typically included Christfried Berger, Wolfgang Stadthaus, Paul Plume, Friedrich Stachat, and Jörg Hildebrandt. Though few in number, the former *Bausoldaten* acted as an organized committee. Participants took turns recording the minutes, which were typed up and distributed at the following meeting. They discussed the situation of current *Bausoldat* units, and their only criticism of the state's secular policies was the difficulty that current construction soldiers had in attending worship services. The minutes from this period reveal a strong religious dimension to these local gatherings of conscientious objectors. While the official Church was more moderate, these gatherings indicate that there was space for pastors and church youth leaders to support activities and positions that were more critical of East German militarization.

In the spring of 1966, as the first generation finished its service and the second cohort was about to begin their service, the *Jungmännerwerk* organized gatherings in Dresden and East Berlin where former *Bausoldaten* could meet with new soldiers and answer their questions.³² Wolfgang Stadthaus and Christfried Berger reported that about twenty-five people attended the gathering in Dresden in May 1966, including six former construction soldiers from Bärenstein, Garz, and Prenzlau, as well as new *Bausoldaten* assigned to Garz (ten) and Bärenstein (four). Also present were the organizers of the gathering: a regional youth pastor and a member of the *Jungmännerwerk*. The program included a Bible study, question-and-answer period, discussion, and Holy Communion. The East Berlin gathering followed a similar structure and concluded with a reading of the appeal "To All Christians" that the Prenzlau II *Bausoldaten* had prepared.³³ The attendance of former construction soldiers at both events indicated their willingness to help inform and educate the next generation of conscientious objectors, as well as the initiative of the Church's youth organizations and clergy to organize such gatherings. At both events, the former *Bau-*

soldaten appeared to have passed on their ideals and activism to the next generation, reflected by the reading of the Prenzlau appeal. A central topic of discussion at both gatherings was the oath, but reports indicated that opinions about the oath were far from unanimous, though details were not recorded. Later minutes reported the formation of regional groups in East Berlin, Dresden, East Sachsen, West Sachsen, and Halle-Leipzig-Madgeburg. Stadthaus and Berger's group in East Berlin emerged as an information hub for the regional groups.³⁴

By June 1966, the service of the second generation of *Bausoldaten* had begun, and the issue of the oath's language was at the forefront of each report sent to the East Berlin group from *Bausoldat* stationing points. At its second meeting on June 9, 1966, the East Berlin group learned that construction soldiers stationed at Garz had taken the oath, though they had voiced their opposition. At Prenzlau, six soldiers refused twice to take the oath. Two *Bausoldaten* at Stralsund were arrested for refusing to take the oath. The report included the address for one of the arrested soldiers (Rainer Eppelmann).³⁵ Of approximately fifty construction soldiers stationed at Bärenstein, about forty had not spoken the words of the oath at the induction ceremony.³⁶

The introduction of unarmed military service in 1964 was a compromise between church, state, and society; however, tension over the oath revealed the unwillingness or limited ability of each side to make further compromises. The Church hierarchy recognized the problems inherent in the oath but was powerless to get the state to modify its language. The East Berlin group of former construction soldiers helped keep the oath a point of contention for the second generation of *Bausoldaten*, though the state authorities became consistent in their punishment of those who refused to take the oath. Consequently, many construction soldiers adopted a more passive resistance to the oath, such as at Bärenstein.

The response of the second generation of *Bausoldaten* to the oath demonstrated the importance of maintaining a consistent position among cohorts of construction soldiers. The organization of regular, GDR-wide gatherings of former construction soldiers was a step toward this goal, as the meetings coordinated information related to unarmed military service throughout the state. The East Berlin group organized three such gatherings of former construction soldiers by the end of 1967. The first meeting took place on September 24–25, 1966,

in East Berlin. Fifteen former *Bausoldaten* attended, as well as a total resister and a *Bausoldat* who had been arrested for refusing to take the oath. The program included presentations by guest speakers, discussion sessions, and a religious service with Holy Communion.³⁷ Among the guest speakers were Christfried Berger, who lectured on the situation of current *Bausoldaten*, and a professor from the United States (unnamed in the minutes), who gave a presentation on "The United States Between Non-Violence and War: Remarks on Martin Luther King and the Vietnam War." The former *Bausoldaten* discussed how to best work with the Lutheran Church to promote pacifist aims, deciding to establish contact with the Conference of Evangelical Church Leaders (which Berger did by sending the Conference a detailed report of the gathering in October). The report also indicated that former soldiers in four *Landeskirchen* had been designated as contact people with whom the Church leadership in each region should work to promote peace service. These former *Bausoldaten* took the initiative to seek closer cooperation with the Church hierarchy, offering to give reports and lectures.³⁸ But even though individual clergy and theologians continued to support *Bausoldaten* activities, there was little indication that the Church followed their recommendations. Subsequent gatherings of former *Bausoldaten* in February and November 1967 followed the model of the first.³⁹ Participants decided that representatives from the regional groups would meet each spring, while the full gathering of the *Bausoldaten* would be held in the fall, with the next gathering scheduled for November 8–10, 1968, thus establishing the tradition of an annual gathering.⁴⁰

Regional groups of former construction soldiers continued to gather regularly in 1967 and 1968, and annual meetings brought together all of the former *Bausoldaten* in the GDR. The documents of the East Berlin group in these years show specific interest among the *Bausoldaten* in the war in Vietnam. The interest of the East German *Bausoldaten* in this conflict is understandable, as the conflict demonstrated the destructive potential of Cold War tensions that had driven the re-militarization program in the GDR. While tensions over the language of the oath had put construction soldiers in direct conflict with the East German state's militarization policies, the situation in Vietnam offered *Bausoldaten* an opportunity to express a broader Christian vision of peace to conscientious objectors abroad. In December

1966 the East Berlin *Bausoldaten* drafted a letter protesting the Vietnam War. Group members discussed various means to publicize the letter and concluded that, by the new year, it would send the final draft to several organizations in the United States, including the Society of Friends, the United States Committee for the Christian Peace Conference, the Church Peace Mission, and the National Service Board for Conscientious Objectors. Thirty-nine members of the first cohort of *Bausoldaten* signed the letter, which offered to American pacifists their solidarity and hope for a peaceful resolution to the war. The signatories connected their Christian beliefs to their pacifism, arguing that conscientious objectors had a responsibility to engage political issues related to peace:

With great hope, we young Christians and opponents of military service in the GDR have watched pastor Martin Luther King's nonviolent struggle for the civil rights of colored people. We believe that from this case of Christian responsibility, an example and model has developed of how man can resolve political conflicts in the era of the atomic bomb without the dangerous use of military power. The politics of your government in Vietnam ruin this hope and put us all in danger. This fills us with worry. As conscientious objectors, we have a particular responsibility for these questions. As Christians, we are obligated to share with others the peace that Jesus Christ gave us on the cross. So we must work together to find constructive proposals for new channels of international cooperation.⁴¹

While the authors declared that their own views of the situation in Vietnam had nothing to do with the GDR's ideological system, the construction soldiers' opposition to the war in Vietnam supported the Soviet bloc's criticism of the United States, suggesting that the East German regime finally received a dividend from supporting conscientious objectors. After all, the authors specifically identified the U.S. government's military policy as a threat to peace everywhere. But the text and intended recipients of the letter point to an agenda more complex than simply supporting the GDR's anti-imperialist rhetoric. From their reference to Martin Luther King's work in the United States, it is clear that these former *Bausoldaten* viewed their work for peace as a so-

cial struggle that required change from the state as well as change from within society. Just as King worked for domestic social change from below in the United States, the authors imply that his model could be followed to bring about change in the GDR. Ultimately, the letter was a declaration of Christian responsibility to act against the state. In the history of German Protestantism, only Karl Barth in his Barmen Declaration of 1934 and members of the Confessing Church had articulated such a notion of Christians' responsibility to actively challenge state authority. The authors also demonstrated their support for the Lutheran Church's recent declarations for peace in Vietnam, but they went further than the Church's passive declaration by asserting an activist effort to achieve peace. By addressing the letter to pacifists in the United States—rather than to the government—the authors appeared to be principally seeking partnerships with Christian pacifists in the United States. The implication of such a partnership was that American conscientious objectors would challenge United States policy in Vietnam and that the East German *Bausoldaten* would actively oppose militarization in the GDR.

Conclusions

The first generation of *Bausoldaten* took significant steps to transform their rejection of armed military service into a social movement. Although few in number, their aims were ambitious; they sought to construct networks between *Bausoldaten* and the Lutheran Church; relationships among conscientious objectors of different faiths; solidarity with conscientious objectors throughout the GDR and in the United States; a genuine pastoral service outside of the framework of the military; and a vision of peace grounded on Christian belief that countered the state's rhetoric of peace through military preparedness. Though forbidden to organize and demonstrate outside of the protective space of churches, the *Bausoldaten* organized a movement that pursued these goals (with many successes). As "a sustained challenge to state authorities in the name of a population that has little formal power with respect to the state," the activities established by the first generation of *Bausoldaten* represented what sociologist Charles Tilly has defined as a national social movement.⁴² Activities aimed at paci-

fism and anti-militarization, primarily within churches at the local level, became the vehicle for directing this movement's opposition to state policy in the GDR.

The first generation of former *Bausoldaten* recognized the importance of establishing regular contact with other conscientious objectors throughout the GDR. The annual gathering of former construction soldiers in East Berlin became an important hub of this contact network and helped forge cross-generational ties among *Bausoldaten*. For example, Helmut Wolff (a first-generation *Bausoldat* who had served a prison sentence for refusing to take the oath) and Helmut Nitzsche (a second-generation *Bausoldat*) met at the annual gathering of former soldiers in 1968. Wolff and Nitzsche became close friends. They established a regional group of former *Bausoldaten* in Leipzig and helped organize the annual GDR-wide gathering of construction soldiers when it moved to Leipzig in 1969.⁴³

Religious belief not only provided conscientious objectors with grounds to request unarmed service but also provided a language and an understanding of peace that could be used to counter the East German state's view that militarization and armaments were necessary to secure peace. Christfried Berger concluded the Prenzlau appeal with a passage from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you" (Luke 6:27–28). When they completed their service, the small group of former *Bausoldaten* in East Berlin promoted a vision of peace grounded on this Christian ethic. The text of their letter opposing the war in Vietnam returned to this interpretation of peace, also citing the example of Martin Luther King's nonviolent struggle for civil rights. The gatherings of former *Bausoldaten* (both regional and national) repeatedly emphasized this message and helped many conscientious objectors make a lifetime commitment to a vision for peace that entailed more than the absence of war or the rejection of a military policy.

Compromise is a pervasive theme throughout this discussion of the *Bausoldaten* and their relationship with the Lutheran Church and the East German state. The creation of an unarmed military service option involved compromise from each side. For the East German government, reputedly the most doctrinaire in the Soviet bloc, the 1964 decree acknowledged religious belief as a legal basis for opting out of armed military service. This fundamental component of the decree, is-

sued only three years after the construction of the Wall, illustrated the limits to the state's secularization policies. This component also highlighted the state's willingness to yield to pressure from Christians. Yet the state did gain a safety valve for discontent. The *Bausoldat* units—which the state did little to publicize—appeared to be an effort to control non-conformist views and place conscientious objectors in a military environment where their activities could be monitored. Also, as the 1966 letter protesting the Vietnam War indicates, the *Bausoldaten* were also critical of militarization and the use of armed force in the West. Anca Şincan's analysis of the successful construction of Orthodox churches in Romania in the late 1970s and early 1980s reveals that an authoritarian state was willing to compromise with the church to satisfy its own need for legitimacy, to play different groups off of one another, and to support a larger policy. As defender of socialism and opponent of Western militarism, while at the same time an authoritarian regime concerned with limiting domestic expressions of discontent, the East German party-state was motivated by each of these reasons to create the *Bausoldaten* compromise. As the blossoming of an independent peace movement in the 1980s indicates, however, the state lost control of the *Bausoldaten* and the discussion of peace. While the state defined peace as something to be guaranteed through armaments and the building of socialism, the *Bausoldaten* articulated an alternative view that was to be achieved through love, cooperation, and the building of ties within and beyond the GDR.

Individuals who chose unarmed service in the *Bausoldat* units also made a significant compromise. The nature of the option put pacifists who rejected armed service into military units where they wore military uniforms, received fundamental military training, and, most importantly, contributed to the military infrastructure of the GDR. The oath of allegiance remained a source of contention; only the first generation at Prenzlau II avoided taking the oath without the penalty of a prison sentence. Upon completing their military service, former construction soldiers faced limited educational and vocational opportunities. On the other hand, individual Non-Conformists found allies and friends within the *Bausoldat* units, building the strong sense of community that is common to soldiers serving together. Ironically, this traditional military component helped bring together otherwise isolated non-conformist pacifists within the GDR. Young men joining the

Bausoldat units could accomplish their goals in symbiosis, at least partially, with the regime. The Vietnam letter illustrates how the *Bausoldaten* could make a broader point about Christian responsibility to act against the state in a message closely oriented toward official policy.

The *Bausoldaten*—both during and after their service—independently constructed activities, associations, and networks far beyond anything the state (or even Church leaders) had imagined. The state had little control of how the *Bausoldaten* used their free time or organized activities after leaving the military. As their range of activities expanded after 1966, they increasingly offered a theologically grounded vision of peace and Christian responsibility in a sustained manner. Former *Bausoldaten* organized annual gatherings and peace events, such as peace seminars at Königswalde (1973–1989) and Meissen (1975–1989). Each of these public events took place in a church with the support of a local pastor. In 1966, the first annual GDR-wide gathering of former construction soldiers was held in a church in East Berlin. In 1969, the gathering moved to Leipzig, where it met annually until 1985. Many of the local grass-roots social initiatives (*Basisgruppen*) that clergy began to sponsor in the 1980s had *Bausoldat* roots. Often, former *Bausoldaten* founded the initiatives in an effort to engage men, women, and children without previous ties to the construction soldiers in Non-Conformist activities separate from state control. Many of the local pastors who supported these groups had completed alternative service as *Bausoldaten*, including some of the most prominent East German peace activists, such as Rainer Eppelmann. Harald Bretschneider, the youth pastor who introduced the famous “Swords into Ploughshares” slogan in 1980, was also a former construction soldier who had served in the early 1960s. The famous weekly Prayer-for-Peace services at St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig—which became an epicenter of the 1989 revolution—were first organized in 1981 by a small group of former *Bausoldaten* (including Helmut Wolff from the first generation) seeking to build ties with broader segments of Leipzig’s population.

The construction soldiers’ expressions of discontent with state policy exceeded those of the official Church. One bishop, on behalf of the Lutheran Church—the third participant in this compromise—appears to have negotiated with the state to create the unarmed service option. By negotiating with the state, the Lutheran Church acknowl-

edged the status quo of SED's rule in the GDR (formally reaffirmed with the "Church in Socialism" policy in the 1970s). But in terms of organization, the Lutheran Church was not a monolith in the GDR. Individual theologians and pastors helped the *Bausoldaten* develop a Christian conceptualization of peace. The *Jungmännerwerk* supported conscientious objectors, and most gatherings of former *Bausoldaten* took place within the space of churches. The decentralized character of the Lutheran Church appears to have contributed to this dual role as a partner with and indirect opponent to the state since it allowed bishops, clergy, and even the *Landeskirchen* to stake out distinct positions. However, reliance on individual pastors and local churches made the *Bausoldaten* dependent on their support and unable to act with complete independence. While spiritual development was not the ultimate goal of the construction soldiers, association with the Lutheran Church, even if at a local level, provided theological grounds for their rejection of the militarization of the Cold War. Izabella Main's analysis of Catholic student groups in Poland presents a similar course of development. The space for creativity that former *Bausoldaten* developed in the GDR, similar to the space established by Catholic student groups in Krakow and Warsaw, became more politically oppositional by 1989.⁴⁴ In both cases, East Germany and Poland, the groups meeting under the sponsorship of the Church became more oppositional than the Church itself.

In the early 1980s, almost two decades after the East Berlin group had introduced the first GDR-wide gathering, the small group of former *Bausoldaten* in Leipzig (Helmut Wolff, Helmut Nitzsche, and Heinz Bächer) issued a statement explaining the special meaning that peace had acquired for them, as Christians:

[Peace is] not only the condition in which weapons are silent, but rather when people and groups of different or opposing opinions, world views, religions, and races work together for the well-being of mankind. [Peace] is a process in which the humanistic basic rights become gradually realized through personal, social and political acts.⁴⁵

The Leipzig group had become a church-sponsored organization and adopted the name Working Group in the Service of Peace (*Arbeitsgrup-*

pe Friedensdienst). Like many other similar groups established throughout the GDR in the 1980s, it represented a new phase of construction soldier activities by engaging non-*Bausoldaten*. Young men and women who had no pre-existing ties to the *Bausoldaten* joined former conscientious objectors who had served in the units in the 1960s (first and second generations) and the 1970s. This small grassroots group recognized that peace needed to be actively constructed by members of society. In the above statement, the Leipzig group explained its view that peace is the means by which human rights could be achieved. This Barthian message of a responsible society, which Katharina Kunter explores in this volume, was articulated not by the Church, but by a group of former construction soldiers seeking to build ties with non-*Bausoldaten* in Leipzig. Rather than addressing the state, these former *Bausoldaten* saw that society could bring about change, echoing the theme of responsibility and cooperation that had been addressed in the 1966 Vietnam letter. For this group, peace and human rights were not separate. Rather, human rights flowed from the cooperation necessary for a responsible society (a society that prioritized the well-being of others, rather than individual freedoms) to assure peace. The *Bausoldaten* represented a small bridge between the theological gap that separated church leaders and churchgoers.

My analysis of the *Bausoldaten* echoes several of Katharina Kunter's conclusions about religion, church-state relations, and the nature of opposition in the GDR. First, the Christian engagement with social issues and opposition is located in the broader Protestant theological tradition in Germany. The theological debates of the 1930s continued to evolve in the postwar period, where they unfolded in the aftermath of World War II and the new Cold War division of Germany and Europe.

Second, despite the SED's program of secularization, the *Bausoldaten* were able to promote a theologically grounded conceptualization of peace that challenged the party-state's discourse. Even the shift toward a more secular emphasis on human rights in the 1980s came from the Lutheran Church's efforts to expand its focus from peace to justice and environmental protection following the 1983 Conciliar Process, not from any state actions or successes of policy. In both cases, clear limits to state power are exposed. In 1964, only three years after the construction of the Berlin Wall, the East German state had already made compromises with Christians that would remain in place through

the remainder of the GDR's existence. While powerful and authoritarian in principle, the GDR had weaknesses that were exposed by its response to Christians and the Lutheran Church. Church-state relations in the GDR were not a dialogue between two monoliths; each made compromises with the other and responded to pressures from Christians within society to alter or adapt existing policies. Perhaps the state needed to strengthen its legitimacy and blunt possible opposition by making concessions to East German Christians. As my analysis of *Bausoldaten* activities after 1964 indicates, if this were the case, Christian opposition to militarism trumped the state's apparent successes with secularization and produced a theologically grounded peace movement independent of state control.

NOTES

- 1 Mary Fulbrook, "Popular Discontent and Political Activism in the GDR," *Contemporary European History* 2–3 (1993): 265–282. Until 1989, many scholars had argued that opposition and dissent in the GDR were limited to intellectual dissidents. See Werner Volkmer, "East Germany: Dissenting Views during the Last Decade," in Rudolf L. Tökes, ed., *Opposition in Eastern Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 113–141. Also see Roger Woods, *Opposition in the GDR Under Honecker, 1971–1985* (London: Macmillan, 1986), 24–42. For a discussion of the extent of secularization in the GDR, see Paul Froese and Steven Pfaff, "Replete and Desolate Markets: Poland, East Germany, and the New Religious Paradigm" *Social Forces* 80, no. 2 (2001): 481–507. On remilitarization, see Cory D. Ross, "'What About Peace and Bread?': East Germans and the Remilitarization of the GDR, 1952–1962," *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 58 (1999).
- 2 In the 1970s and 1980s, former *Bausoldaten* (often émigrés) published several books and collections of materials in West Germany about the units. Klemens Richter, "Kirchen und Wehrdienstverweigerung in der DDR [Churches and conscientious objectors in the GDR]," *Deutschland Archiv* 12, no. 1 (January 1979): 39–46; Bernd Eisenfeld, *Kriegsdienstverweigerung in der DDR—ein Friedensdienst?* [Conscientious objectors in the GDR—A peace service?] (Frankfurt am Main: Haag & Herchen Verlag, 1978); Klaus Ehring and Martin Dallwitz, *Schwerter zu Pflugscharen: Friedensbewegung in der DDR* [Swords into ploughshares: The peace movement in the GDR] (Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1982), 120–137; Uwe Koch and Stephan Eschler, *Zähne hoch Kopf zussammenbeissen: Dokumente zur Wehrdienstverweigerung in der DDR, 1962–1990* (Kückenshagen: Scheunen-Verlag, 1994).

For analysis of the Königsvalde peace seminar, Stasi surveillance, and the development of conscientious objectors from 1952 to 1978, see Thomas Widera, ed., *Pazifisten in Uniform: Die Bausoldaten im Spannungsfeld der SED-Politik 1964–1989* [Pacifists in uniform: Construction soldiers in the tense context of SED politics, 1964–1989] (Dresden: V&R Press, 2004). In September 2004, former *Bausoldaten* gathered for a three-day conference of lectures and discussions about *Bausoldat* service and their role in contemporary history. The conference organizers published a volume with texts of the lectures and video of many of the sessions. See Uwe Koch, ed. *Zivilcourage und Kompromiss: Bausoldaten in der DDR 1964–1990, eine Dokumentation* [Civil courage and compromise: Construction soldiers in the GDR 1964–1990, A documentation] (Berlin: Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, 2005) and the DVD *Zivilcourage und Kompromiss: Bausoldaten in der DDR 1964–1990* (Robert-Havemann-Gesellschaft, 2005).

- 3 Ross, 111–112.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 116–118, 120.
- 5 For a discussion of Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms as it relates to the GDR, see Robert F. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church and the East German State: Political Conflict and Change Under Ulbricht and Honecker* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), 18–19. See Rolf Ahlers, *The Barmen Theological Declaration of 1934: The Archaeology of a Confessional Text* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986). For an excellent analysis of the importance of the Barmen Declaration and the history of the Confessing Church, see Frederic Spotts, *The Churches and Politics in Germany* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 9–12. See also Peter Hoffman, *The History of the German Resistance, 1933–1945* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977), 13–14. Shelley Baranowski argues that the priority of most of its clergy was not resistance to the Nazis, but rather preserving the Lutheran Church's autonomy. See Shelley Baranowski, *The Confessing Church, Conservative Elites, and the Nazi State* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986).
- 6 In 1969, the eight East German Landeskirchen severed their formal ties with the EKD (West Germany). Though retaining the Landeskirchen administrative structure, they established a somewhat more centralized institution called the Federation of Evangelical Churches; Goeckel, 14–15.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 121.
- 8 "Gesetzblatt der Deutschen Demokratischen Republic [Decree of the German Democratic Republic]," Berlin, September 16, 1964, 129–130, private collection of Heinz Bächer [hereafter PA-HB], file: "Gesetzblätter–Allgemein [Decrees–General]"
- 9 Koch and Eschler, 16.
- 10 "Gesetzblatt," 129; Heinz Bächer, interview by the author, in Jena, Germany, November 10, 2001.
- 11 "Gesetzblatt," 129.

- 12 John Sandford, *The Sword and the Ploughshare: Autonomous Peace Initiatives in East Germany* (London: Merlin Press and END, 1983), 29.
- 13 A short article in *Neues Deutschland* (the official party organ of the SED) described *Bausoldat* service as an example of how social democracy respects the civil rights and duties of every citizen—even conscientious objectors. Hans-Joachim Ehlert, “Was sind Bausoldaten? [What are construction soldiers?],” *Neues Deutschland*, November 26, 1964; clipping available in Evangelisches Zentralarchiv, Berlin [hereafter EZA] 104/632. A 1966 article in *Neue Zeit* cited the example of *Bausoldat* service as a reflection of how the NVA was an instrument of “peace politics,” in contrast to the “aggressive politics” of the West German military. “Junge Christen in der Nationalen Volksarmee [Young Christians in the National People’s Army],” *Neue Zeit*, August 5, 1966, 5, EZA 102/432.
- 14 Several former *Bausoldaten* recalled that they were on their own to make their case before the draft boards. Bächer, interview; Helmut Wolff, interview by the author, Leipzig, Germany, November 12, 2001; Helmut Nitzsche, interview by the author, Leipzig, Germany, November 12, 2001.
- 15 Koch and Eschler, 17–23.
- 16 For various estimates, see *ibid.*, 18.
- 17 Ross, 134.
- 18 Koch and Eschler, 20–21.
- 19 Rainer Eppelmann recalls Mitzenheim’s negotiations. See Dirk Philipsen, *We Were the People: Voices from East Germany’s Revolutionary Autumn of 1989* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1993), 60; Goeckel, 60. The EZA in Berlin does not contain a paper trail documenting church/clergy involvement in any negotiations that led to this decree.
- 20 “Gesetzblatt,” 129.
- 21 As for confession and motivation, the first generation is representative of the sample of *Bausoldaten* who served from 1964 to 1973 (six generations); Eisenfeld, *Kriegsdienstverweigerung*, 75–81.
- 22 Wolfgang Stadthaus explained that a pre-existing church connection was especially important for the first generation of *Bausoldaten*, which began their service the same month the NVA issued the decree. Wolfgang Stadthaus, interview by author, Berlin, Germany, July 22, 2005.
- 23 For example, one former *Bausoldat* explained that he could only find work as a sexton at church cemeteries. Jürgen Kiesow, interview by the author, Berlin, Germany, July 19, 2005.
- 24 Bächer, interview.
- 25 “Gesetzblatt,” 130.
- 26 Eisenfeld, “Wenn wir nicht handeln,” 123–125. See also Koch and Eschler, 22.
- 27 Stadthaus could not explain why his unit had not been given prison sentences. Stadthaus, interview, July 22, 2005.
- 28 Konferenz der Evangelischen Kirchenleitungen [Conference of the Evangelical Church Leadership], “Zum Friedensdienst der Kirche—empfehlung des Arbeitskreises für Wehrdienstfragen, June 25, 1965 [Regarding

- the peace service of the Church—recommendations of the Working Circle for military service questions]” in Koch and Eschler, 42–43.
- 29 Ibid., 24–25.
- 30 “An alle Christen [To all Christians],” March 2, 1966. Matthias-Domaschk Archiv, Berlin (hereafter MDA): TH 07C. A copy of this appeal can also be found in Ehring and Dallwitz, 126–127.
- 31 Ehring and Dallwitz, 125, 128.
- 32 Stadthaus, interview.
- 33 “1. Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe ehem. BS [First meeting of the Working Group of former construction soldiers],” May 5, 1966, personal archive of Wolfgang Stadthaus (hereafter PA-WS), p. 1.
- 34 “4. Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe ehem. BS [Fourth meeting of the Working Group of former construction soldiers],” August 11, 1966, PA-WS. Also, see “6. Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe ehem. BS [Sixth Meeting of the Working Group of former construction soldiers],” January 10, 1968, PA-WS.
- 35 “2. Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe ehem. BS [Second Meeting of the Working Group of former construction soldiers],” June 9, 1966, PA-WS, p. 1. Eppelmann, who would become a prominent peace activist in the GDR, served an eight-month sentence. According to Eppelmann, one other person in his unit also refused to take the oath. Philipsen, *We Were the People*, 61.
- 36 “3. Sitzung der Arbeitsgruppe ehem. BS [Third Meeting of the Working Group of former construction soldiers],” July 7, 1966, PA-WS, p. 1.
- 37 “2. Sitzung.” Initial plans had been made at the May 5, 1966, meeting to schedule the gathering for July 2–3, 1966. The minutes included a tentative schedule of events for the gathering. “1. Sitzung.”
- 38 Christfried Berger, “Kurzer Bericht über die 1. Tagung des Mitarbeiterkreises ehemaliger *Bausoldaten* [Abridged report of the first gathering of the collaborative circles of former construction soldiers],” letter dated October 4, 1966, EZA 104/633.
- 39 “V. Sitzung,” December 12, 1966, PA-WS. Wolfgang Stadthaus has a list of all the participants at this gathering. Stadthaus, interview.
- 40 Christfried Berger, “Kurzer Bericht über die 3. Tagung des Mitarbeiterkreises ehem. BS [Abridged report of the third gathering of the collaborative circles of former construction soldiers],” Berlin, November 20, 1967. PA-WS.
- 41 “An die christlichen Wehrdienstverweigerer in den USA [To the Christian conscientious objectors in the USA],” in Eisenfeld, *Kriegsdienstverweigerung*, document 40.
- 42 Charles Tilly, “Social Movements, Old and New,” *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 10 (1988): 1.
- 43 Wolff, interview; Nitzsche, interview.
- 44 Izabella Main, “Avant-Garde of the Catholic Church? Catholic Student Groups at the Dominican Churches in Poznań and Kraków, Poland, (paper presented at the conference “Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe,” German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 2006).
- 45 “Der Begriff Frieden...[The notion of peace...],” no date, PA-HB.

On the Ruin of Christendom

*Religious Politics and the Challenge of Islam in the New West*¹

PATRICK HYDER PATTERSON

Islam represents for the West a great threat, just as communism did.... To succeed against Islam means preserving European culture in Europe and America... This success cannot be achieved unless we succeed in the fight against our own decadence, as represented in the demographic crisis, de-Christianization, and the loss of our self-respect.

Vladimír Palko²

Can we find fault with some Muslims who already are talking not just about a European Islam but about an Islamic Europe? Only a political blind man does not understand the reality that is being created with pressure of immigration... This is not—thank God—the Ottoman army of the Sultan. They are our contemporaries who are taking advantage of the logic of globalization and seeking work where it is to be found... They are right! They are certainly not coming with the intention to Islamicize Europe. But they are coming as Muslims, and they most likely will remain Muslims.

Josip Sabol³

Even in Bratislava, Kraków and Budapest, the minarets will one day rise to the sky. The question is not “if” but “when.”

Srdja Trifković⁴

Can the political and cultural order of Europe make a place for Muslims and Islam? More than is now realized, the answer may depend—as it has in the past—on the histories, values, and experiences of the European East. Adopting a broad understanding of the historical and ideational confines of Europe, I want to suggest here the need to reframe the contemporary examination of the Western engagement with Islam. The new perspective required must recognize the implications and complications of merging the former communist countries into a predominantly liberal-secular and arguably post-Christian Europe and, in turn, into an expansive New West that spans the Atlantic and now

finds itself, voluntarily or not, positioned as the primary antagonist to political Islam. The assembly of these enlarged (and growing) communities involves much more than merely grafting Western European and American categories and values onto the East. Despite the obvious power imbalances, the experiences and concerns of Eastern Europe have themselves been, and will be, an important constituent element of the cultural-political complex that is the New West. A truer rendering of the complex social and cultural negotiations underway with the Muslim world over the past several decades will therefore rest on a willingness to take a fresh look at the evidence that comes to us from *all* of Europe—Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox. When the scope of inquiry is broadened appropriately, this approach will demand much more careful attention to what is a rich and surprisingly varied collection of European answers to that critical question, “Can Islam fit?”

At issue here are “civilizational” distinctions that are thought to be grounded, ultimately, in religion.⁵ Testing the validity of these ideas must mean, if nothing else, taking religion seriously. And as regards Europe’s own Christianity, that has proven exceptionally difficult to do. Neither the anti-Muslim politicians nor the excitable mass-media commentators nor the supposedly more judicious and broad-minded academic community have found much reason thus far to take European Christianity seriously *as a religion*. In the end, Samuel Huntington and his followers might turn out to be right when they assert that religion forms the basis for an essential cultural divide. But that assumption should not go without much more thorough testing, nor should “religion” be reduced at the outset to some nominal, sweeping, largely empty label. The *content* of religious commitment must be acknowledged for what it is: meaningful, specific, active, potent.

The recognition of this religious content and its power in shaping European history should, in turn, steer us to concentrate on the actions of the various advocates and practitioners of what I term *political Christianity*: those groups and people who have understood their politics to arise from Christian values and teachings, be they of Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox derivation. These naturally include, in the first instance, the variety of Christian Democratic and Christian Social movements and their heirs, allies, and fellow travelers.⁶ But political Christianity must be understood as going far beyond the parties themselves. Any truly comprehensive understanding of the phenom-

enon requires a concurrent examination of the political thought and action of major religious institutions, church leaders, theologians, and lay organizations. Finally, we need to recognize that political Christianity may exist, and still be extremely important, even when it does not flow in channels established by expressly religious institutions. That fact makes it all the more important to search attentively for the significance of Christian faith in the politics of certain less obvious subjects, such as, for example, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, whose stances on many issues have been shaped by his religious beliefs, and Brown's predecessor Tony Blair, who by many accounts looked to his religion to find a firm basis for his support of military engagement in Iraq, while at the same time insisting that devout Muslims can be—indeed, should be—fully British.

More than has yet been recognized, the integration of Muslims in contemporary Europe has been (and likely will be) profoundly affected by the ways in which these key institutions and individuals have looked to their Christianity to make or deny a place for Islam. The purpose of this study is to begin to uncover those critical, specifically *religious* dimensions of the European response to Islam—and to see what might be learned from the distinctive responses of East Europeans.

Are the specific values of Islamic commitment incompatible with those of the largely liberal, largely secular New West that has emerged after 1989? The question is an uncomfortable but fair one; indeed, it is a problem that recently has occupied some of the best minds of reformist Islam. The answers offered up in the contemporary European and American debates—which often, or so it seems at first glance, turn out to be some version of “no”—are certain to prove extraordinarily important. But thus far, little attention has been paid to *how* and *why* those answers have been formulated as they have been, and just as importantly, *by whom*.

Even among those who reject anything that smacks of a clash-of-civilizations approach, religion is widely believed to lie at the heart of the matter. Yet this habitual diagnosis is potentially deceptive. It is worth remembering, for instance, that the all-too-real “clash” that left hundreds of cars torched, businesses vandalized, and people injured across France in 2005 may well have had more to do with unemployment, bigotry, isolation, and despair than with anything inherent in Islamic or Christian “culture.” Still, religious values—and just as im-

portant, religious *identities* that may be only loosely correlated with traditional religious beliefs—are undeniably inextricable from the equation.

The foundational problem of Islam's compatibility—or its mutability, or in some formulations, the mutability of the West itself—implicates, in turn, a number of other subsidiary concerns that are, if less pressing politically, nonetheless central to our understanding of contemporary European history and society: Can we truly speak of a cultural and political identity that, through the historical legacy of Christianity, makes the experience of East Europeans and West Europeans something coherent, whole, and enduring? Will the effort to exclude Islam prove to be the rallying cause that most effectively binds together the New West? And where might the Eastern border of this New West be marked? Is Samuel Huntington correct in his assertion that “the most significant dividing line in Europe” is the border between Orthodoxy and Catholicism at the beginning of the sixteenth century?⁷ Or are all things made new in the rejoined battle with Islam, rendering the longstanding split with the Eastern church and Orthodox culture an irrelevant artefact of the past?

Eastern Standard Time: The Renewed Centrality of Eastern Europe's History with Islam

These questions will not have easy answers in any case, but they will not have answers at all without a much more careful acknowledgment of the ways in which East Europeans have lived, worked, and fought with their Muslim neighbors and their old Muslim adversaries. Some of what we will have to consider is bracingly, confusingly new and therefore hard to subject to traditional historical analysis. As the evidence reviewed here suggests, the newly incorporated European East is only now beginning to fret over the sort of immigration that may create large, poorly integrated Muslim communities, concentrated in urban centers. A number of cities in the former Soviet Union and a few sites in the former Yugoslavia have inherited these problems from the internal migration of communist times and the displacements of post-communism. But with these exceptions, such an intimate experience with Muslim newcomers is utterly unknown in Eastern Europe, where

the absence of a colonial past, along with communism's disruption of the global economy and transnational labor flows, combined to keep such new Muslim centers from developing.

But Christians in Eastern Europe do have a history with Muslim neighbors. Indeed, their history with Islam is much richer, more continuous, and in some ways more intense than that of their Western European counterparts, who have come to the problem only in the last few decades, when immigration made the old demographic frontiers far less relevant. For it is in Eastern Europe, and particularly in the Balkans, that we find large, well-established autochthonous populations of Muslims living alongside Christians—as they have for hundreds of years, since the time of the Ottoman conquests. There is simply nothing like this in Western Europe. After the completion of the *Reconquista* in 1492 and the final expulsion of Spain's remaining *Moriscos* in 1614, the European West lost any real chance for daily contact with Muslim neighbors (and those opportunities had long been limited to only a small section of the West in any case). Except as colonialists, and thus at great distances and “safely” abroad, Western Europeans would not live with Muslims in any great numbers until the influx of guest workers and immigrants began in the period of decolonization following World War II. The West's history with Islam since 1500 is distanced, detached, unfamiliar, and tinged with the superiority of a remembered history of European imperial dominance. In world-historical terms it is, in fact, the Western experience that is the outlier.

Eastern Europe's history with Islam runs in a different direction. In Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, and many parts of what was once the Russian Empire, Christians have lived alongside large Muslim populations for centuries, and until quite recently, they have done so in what was perhaps a surprisingly peaceful manner.⁸ This is not to say that all was calm and cheery: the pattern of coexistence under Islamic rule depended on non-Muslim Ottoman subjects' acquiescence in a decidedly second-class status, while communism held in check to some extent ethno-national tensions that could easily have been coupled with religious distinctions, as indeed they later were.

East European history has not been kind to the Muslim past. In the Balkans, the received historical tradition teaches Christians to re-

member their pre-independence existence as the time of “the Ottoman yoke.” In places like Poland, Croatia, and Hungary, those parts of Eastern Europe that either successfully resisted Muslim rule or cast it off earlier, a parallel tradition speaks with pride of the (Christian) nation’s heroic service in the long and costly, but ultimately victorious, struggle against Islam. The relationship with Islam is colored not by memories of lost imperial dominance, but by a lingering resentment or fear of imperial subjection. Accordingly, Eastern standards for dealing with the rival faith may differ from those applied in the West.

Given the weight of these histories, the idea of the “clash of civilizations” has proven extraordinarily popular in East European public discourse. Drawing on powerful received traditions, many important political and cultural actors in the region have laid claim to what would seem to be the benefits of being on the “right” side of Huntington’s boundaries, pointing repeatedly to Eastern Europe’s historical role as a bulwark against Islamic barbarism, and reasserting an Eastern Westernness that, it is said, was there all along, shining through the dark communist interlude. Yet the problem remains that comparatively little attention has actually been paid to how religious people—in either East or West—have shaped these representations of the past encounter with Islam, which are, it must be said, inherently religious in content if not in provenance.

With the emergence of the New West after 1989, the histories of Eastern Europe have begun to converge once more with those of their Western neighbors. The inclusion of Eastern perspectives and explicitly religious thinking in the examination of Islam’s allegedly dubious compatibility with European values will therefore serve a critical purpose. By answering such important questions with a search both for key differences among the various societies of Europe as well as for commonalities among the cultures of Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism, we may put to the test the idea of an essential civilizational distinction that excludes Islam. If the civilizational differences are thought to arise first and foremost from religion, the encounter with Islam will surely show us how much those religious differences really matter, if at all.

In the Shadow of the Secular: Christendom's Twilight and a Crescent Moon Rising

As articulated over the past two decades, the responses of political Christians to the questions raised here have taken on a tremendous sense of urgency, underscoring just how troubled European society has become in the face of the new, or renewed, Islamic encounter. Yet for all their obvious present significance, those Christian perspectives also make clear the enduring relevance of Europe's long history with the Muslim world. Just as importantly, they contradict neat and simple counter-stereotyping of the European discourse on Islam as a monolith of xenophobic rejectionism, though that fact is often overlooked in favor of headline-grabbing or theory-confirming simplicity.

A keener sensitivity to the *origins* and *sources* of the evolving culture of controversy is, furthermore, clearly in order. Contributions to the debate over Islam have come, of course, from many points on the ideological spectrum, and from people with widely divergent commitments to religion (indeed, even from people committed to combating religion). This diversity of viewpoints notwithstanding, one tendency shared by many of the most prominent makers of the emergent European cultural and political order has been an inclination to wield the Christian religion (something that, ironically enough, the broader European society has famously abandoned) as a cultural shield against Muslim newcomers. In the political culture of the New West, in which the worrisome imagery of *jihad* has replaced the Cold War rhetoric of communism and its "evil empire," the invocation of a "Western heritage" derived implicitly or explicitly from Christianity has seemed to promise a great unifying power.

And a power sorely missed as well. For Christendom is no more. The Roman Catholic ideal of a solidary community of believers, with state and society aligned in a respect for Church authority and an acceptance of Christian doctrine, has long since proven unsustainable. What is Catholic is greatly diminished; what is catholic, exceedingly difficult to find. Now no Christian church is universal except in principle (and ecumenism has cast even that in doubt). Nor is Christianity itself practiced or even acknowledged universally in much more than a nominal sense in many of the lands of the original Christian core. Nev-

ertheless, in the post-Reformation, secular-liberal order and, moreover, precisely *through* that order, something of the old religious heritage is said to still live on, sustaining the essential values of the faith in an increasingly faithless Europe through culture and through law—managing to thrive, or at least survive, on the ruin of Christendom.

This theme is one that surfaces repeatedly among Europe's advocates of Christian politics. In those circles, this principle can be nuanced and accommodating, but it can also take a more assertive forms, such as that used by politicians and activists like Zsolt Semjén, the leader of Hungary's Christian Democratic People's Party and one of the more provocative and uncompromising voices of that country's cultural and religious right. Writing in the leading Catholic magazine *Új ember* (New Man), Semjén forcefully rejected the idea that "the miracle that we call European civilization" can ever be divorced from its spiritual roots: "This is Europe, whether you like it or not: Christian civilization. Because—paradoxically—even its negation, from Voltaire to Marx, can only be explained within the scope of Christian culture." Magyars, he insisted, were European precisely because they were faithful to their nation's Christian tradition, having defended Europe for a millennium "against the Tatars, the Turks, and—put diplomatically—other forms of Eastern paganism."⁹

Political Christianity thus continues to assert strong claims on European identity and European norms. The tendency is arguably even stronger and more vehement in Eastern Europe, where it is inspired by a sense that Christian politics must rush to fill the void left by communism, and that what is at issue is not something new but rather a restoration of religion to its former, rightful place after decades of atheistic oppression. Such claims on Europeanness, and Islam's tendency to complicate them, are abundantly in evidence, for example, in a 2002 statement by the Catholic bishops of Slovakia on the future prospects of the European Union, which their country was poised to join. Speaking in the context of a continent-wide debate over whether an explicit acknowledgment of Christianity should be included in the proposed European Constitution, these Church leaders were adamant that their religious tradition—and theirs alone—was the source of the very principles of freedom and pluralism that had come to distinguish European society. "The philosophy of human rights," they argued, "is a spiritual product of the Judeo-Christian civilization and it is not repeated to

any such extent in any other religious and/or cultural system... Europe would have never become what it is now without Christianity. The representatives of all the countries should not forget it.”¹⁰

As regards Islam specifically, the Slovak episcopate noted that the European East was not like the West, with its large population of Muslims and its “mixed” social structure. Supra-national integration, however, meant that Slovaks would soon be coming into contact with immigrants whose backgrounds were almost totally alien, and this would be a critical opportunity to display “not hostility and fear, but love and understanding” rooted in Christian teachings. Change was on the way, and Eastern Europe, too, would have to learn to adjust to Islam. Yet Europe’s fundamental identity could not, for the sake of pluralism and tolerance, become too far removed from Christian culture without grave risks to the EU project itself, which was, the bishops reminded their audience, largely the brainchild of Christian (and indeed Catholic) statesmen like France’s Robert Schuman, Germany’s Konrad Adenauer, and Italy’s Alcide De Gasperi.¹¹

In voicing such concerns, the leaders of the Slovak church exemplify one of the fundamental dynamics of contemporary political Christianity: the attempt to maintain the legal and cultural influence of Christian values against challenges on two fronts, from both the irreligious and adherents of other religions. Paradoxically, however, in contemporary “post-Christian” Europe it has been the secularized (but not necessarily the secularists—a critical distinction¹²) who have talked in the loudest, nastiest, and most heated terms about the menace presented by unassimilated Muslim immigrants and, more specifically, about the threat posed by Islam *as a religion*—that is, as a system of belief with its own characteristic and purportedly disastrous implications for governmental authority, church-state relations, freedom, democracy, and human rights.¹³ Europe reliably continues to produce its extreme (and extremely noticeable) Jean-Marie Le Pens, Jörg Haiders, Umberto Bossis, and Pim Fortuyns. It sustains both its hard-right “national” parties and its outraged and outrageous publicists and public intellectuals like Christopher Hitchens and the self-described “Christian atheist” Oriana Fallaci. Fallaci, in response to the events of 9/11, stepped up a campaign against Muslim influence that, in its horror of terrorism and Islamist illiberalism, rapidly and repeatedly tended to lump together all of those she called “the sons of Allah” with the ex-

tremism of Osama bin Laden.¹⁴ But the most strident anti-immigrant or anti-Islamic voices do not, in the main, originate from anything even resembling an explicitly Christian understanding of politics. The invocation of a European “Christian heritage” by non-religious politicians and public intellectuals can therefore seem at times more like a cynical tool for sure-fire political gain or media attention.

The flashpoints of the public debate have, in any case, produced plenty of talk about the importance of religion, yet those conversations (or monologues) do not yield much reliable insight into the motivations and hopes of the religious, be they Muslim or Christian. To understand what European political Christianity itself has desired, we have to look elsewhere, going beyond those who make the most noise and get the most attention.

The range and complexity of the responses offered is, in fact, remarkable: advocates of Christian politics have sometimes reinforced negative understandings of Islam, but they have also done a great deal to try to undermine anti-Islamic sentiments. Many have viewed the new developments as a challenge to promoting what they understand as characteristically Christian values of interfaith tolerance, co-existence, and peace.¹⁵ Others, however, have seen the Muslim influx and the rise of an assertive and unapologetically Islamic community in Europe as a call to re-Christianize the continent and defend its culture against a rising anti-Christian threat.¹⁶

Often we find a third mode as well, one that combines a measured insistence on Christian charity with a deep unease about the theological underpinnings of Islam and its compatibility with European values. This more uncertain, contradictory response is typical, for example, of German political Christianity’s recent call for Muslim immigrants (and, critically, for their not-quite-German descendants) to respect and observe a German *Leitkultur*, a “leading culture” said to be grounded in characteristically European—and thus by implication characteristically Christian—values, ideas, practices, and experiences.

Fast attacked as a mask and an instrument for raw xenophobia, the term itself has fallen into disfavor, but the themes associated with *Leitkultur* live on prominently in the attitudes of the center-right Christian Democratic Union and, especially, its coalition partner, the Christian Social Union. It is in this more conflicted, multivalent register, for example, that Wolfgang Schäuble, a CDU leader who became Germa-

ny's Interior Minister in late 2005, could insist that "Islam is indisputably a part of Germany and Europe" while at the same time cautioning that "[w]ithout a doubt, as Islam is lived in our liberal societies, it will have to adjust in the spirit of *complete acceptance of our legal and values systems*, i.e. *become more European*. Only those who drop their claims to absolutism can be a part of a pluralistic and democratic order. Conversely, European communities will also have to learn to accept the special religious features of Islam—but not the political ones—as one facet of our lived reality in Europe."¹⁷ This tendency to play the game both ways, and to blend a basic distrust of Islam with talk of tolerance, openness, and respect, is a familiar trope in the rhetoric of European political Christianity more generally. Along these lines, many critics of the Dutch *Christen Democratisch Appel* (a Catholic-Protestant coalition in the Christian Democratic tradition) have seen a not-so-subtle message for Muslim immigrants in the party's continuing insistence on a respect for the "values and norms" of Dutch society.¹⁸

There is ample evidence of a similar sort of ambivalence and equivocation in the resurgent political Christianity of the former communist world as well. It surfaces quite clearly, for example, in the messages on Islam circulated by the Catholic Church in Croatia. Writing in the official organ of the archbishopric of Zagreb, *Glas koncila*, Josip Sabol has observed that "[t]here can be no doubt that until it comes to an *aggiornamento* [*podanašjenje*] of Islam, the Islamic world cannot accept human rights as they are understood by Western philosophy, that is, human rights grounded in natural law and reason." According to this Catholic writer and theology instructor, the great gulf between Muslim and "European-American" concepts of legal and political order represented "a great problem for the thirty million Muslims in Europe and for all the other nations of Europe"—including, ominously, the Croats, who shared a border with what Sabol concluded was an increasingly Islamicized Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹⁹

Clearly, then, Christian politics does not speak with one voice to the question of Islam's future in Europe. That was not the case before 9/11, or before the passing of the old Cold War divide, and it is not the case now, however much the idea of an Islamic "green menace" may have suggested an urgent need for Western unity. There are, however, some important commonalities in the European Christian responses, and in practically every instance, politically engaged be-

lievers have recognized in the new encounter with Islam something of critical importance: a way of restoring Christianity's lost meaning for European society.

This will be a tall order. European states are among the most secularized societies in the world. Many of the old allegiances to God and church simply do not exist any more, and even among believers those loyalties and claims to primacy and authority are challenged by a host of countervailing forces, some of them compelling: consumerism, sexual liberation, individualism, capitalist materialism, feminism, anti-traditionalist tastes for the modern and the new, an equation of irreligion with progressive thought, and secular-liberal notions of freedom that deny the religiously-derived assumptions behind prior theories of rights and duties. (Conspicuous by omission from this list is the Marxist materialism that once dominated East European public discourse. For the time being, at least, that particular challenge to Christianity seems to have run its course.) Across Europe, the fortunes of explicitly Christian politics have been subject to tremendous change in recent decades. Christianity as a political movement has seen its power fractured and attenuated in some parts of Western Europe, most notably with the implosion in the early 1990s of Italy's *Democrazia Cristiana*, long considered the model of Catholic electoral success. At the same time, the events of 1989 have opened up new avenues for mobilization and activism, allowing the establishment or re-establishment of important new Christian political configurations in Eastern Europe. Yet even the experience of the East has, in the main, frustrated the hopes of those who had longed for a recovery of something like the old ways, when Catholic and Orthodox hierarchies in a number of states could expect to exert considerable influence on key political questions.

Despite these ups and downs, most avowedly Christian political movements have shown a remarkable durability in the face of the dramatically secularized environments in which they must operate. Christian politics is far from dominant in Europe, but it is very much alive. And as regards the encounter, or "clash," with Islam, there is every reason to believe that the teachings of prominent Christian religious leaders, the programs of the Christian parties, and the opinions of ordinary Christian believers (and voters) will prove extremely important, for Muslims, Christians, and non-believers alike.

A Monotheism Too Far? The Trouble with Islam

What, then, does Christian politics have to say about the future of Islam in Europe? Given the continued vitality of expressly religious approaches to governance in many European polities, is it possible to speak of a specifically Christian response to these thorny questions of inclusion and exclusion?

To reach these issues, and to draw into focus most clearly the perceived conflict between putatively “alien” religious, cultural, and political traditions, demands an expansive understanding of the concept of “political Christianity.” The most natural targets for such an analysis are, of course, political parties, and chief among them the Christian Democratic and Christian Social movements and their offspring. In Eastern Europe, probably the most prominent venue for Christian politics since 1989 has been Poland. The country’s right-wing Law and Justice Party (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS) is not a direct outgrowth of the Christian Democratic tradition, but under the leadership of brothers Lech and Jarosław Kaczyński, who became president and prime minister of the country in 2005 and 2006, respectively, it has diligently cast itself as a defender of traditional Christian values and the Roman Catholic identity of Polish society. In the rhetoric of Law and Justice and its frequent ally, the right-wing Radio Maryja, Poland is indelibly Catholic. Those who do not conform to that Catholic-national identity, and to the particular(ist) version of Catholic values ascribed to it, are treated as threats to “true” Poles and their culture. Most notably, PiS has expressed distrust and, in some instances, outright hostility toward Poland’s Jewish and gay and lesbian communities and the lawmakers of the European Union, which PiS alleges is attempting to force the country to accept anti-Catholic, non-Polish norms.²⁰

Notwithstanding all this insistence that culture and law are and must remain grounded in Christianity, it is clear that—for the present—Poles still find themselves at a considerable remove from the specific question of Islam’s compatibility with European values. In their exercise of state power with foreign Muslim governments and business partners, for example, PiS leaders can adopt a courtly, even welcoming stance. President Lech Kaczyński welcomed Saudi King Abdullah with a proclamation, or perhaps more accurately a concession, that “Chris-

tian” Poland could and should respect Islam.²¹ The Muslim religion, it appears, does not yet figure as an essential entry on the list of perceived threats to Polishness and Catholicism.

Along these lines, Adam Krzemiński, the longtime editor of the left-leaning Polish weekly *Polityka*, has offered an apt assessment of his country’s position in the broader European debates over immigration, Muslims, and multiculturalism. Polish culture and society, he notes, “have not been untouched by Islam.” But in the absence of large-scale Muslim immigration to the old socialist East, the influences have remained attenuated, limited largely to the historical memories of Turkish threats, a few small remnant Tatar communities, and most recently, the first stirrings of new, ex-Catholic converts.²²

But with its exposure to the unified European market and its entry into NATO and the “coalition of the willing” against Iraq, Poland has, like most of its East European neighbors, inherited the concerns of the New West. Almost certainly the dynamics of integration will, sooner or later, move East Europeans toward a much more concrete reckoning with Islam’s implications for culture, politics, law, and security. Still, in the main, change seems at the moment safely distant from Poland itself. Or as Krzemiński has put it: “A lot of water will have to flow from the Vistula into the Baltic before a Polish minister of the interior steps up like Wolfgang Schäuble at the Berlin Islam conference to announce that Islam is part of the Polish identity.” Although Islam has enjoyed a growing influence within Poland, Krzemiński noted,

[t]his is not to say that Warsaw has a Turkish quarter the likes of Berlin’s Neukölln. The gaps in the domestic job market left by the hundreds of thousands of Poles who have gone to Britain and Ireland are filled by Ukrainians not Turks. Oriana Fallaci’s broadside against the Oriental illegal immigrants who were defacing the monuments in Florence can be purchased in luxury bindings in Polish bookshops. And at the time of the “cartoon conflict” a conservative Polish paper also published the Danish Muhammad caricatures in a proud show of European solidarity and a nod to the “clash of civilizations.” But Poles are still very much the silent onlookers in Western European debates about Islam.²³

Thus far, Western Europe's dynamics of economic expansion and immigration have meant that Poland—and with it, I conclude, most of the European East outside the Balkans and the former Soviet Union—encounters Islam and its adherents largely as abstractions. Muslims are still “elsewhere.” Few of them are fellow citizens, neighbors, or competitors for jobs.

The Christian political parties of Eastern Europe are, however, beginning to show signs of worry about the power and meaning of Islam as a new and now specifically domestic concern. Like many of his fellows on the cultural-traditionalist right, Slovak politician Vladimír Palko has been especially vexed by the prospect of the admission of Turkey to the EU, a development that would mean, he reminded readers, “that any one of the seventy million Turks would have the right to settle anywhere in Europe, let's say, for instance, Slovakia.”²⁴ Clearly, the problem of Islam is drawing nearer to the homes and minds of East Europeans. For Palko, a member of Parliament, a former leader of Slovakia's Christian Democratic Movement (*Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie*, KDH), more recently a founder of the breakaway Conservative Democrats of Slovakia (*Konzervatívni demokrati Slovenska*, KDS), and the country's interior minister from October 2002 to February 2006, the situation has seemed almost hopeless. “Europe is gradually losing a part of its territory,” he has argued, because “as a consequence of the unwillingness to integrate into European culture, Muslim enclaves in European cities are, in a cultural sense, Asia or Africa. They are places where a European practically does not know to live, cannot live, and does not want to live. The success of the one is the loss of the other. No win-win method is operative.”²⁵ Europe, in this view, finds itself in a “war” much like the Cold War. To Palko, as to a number of other advocates of resistance in the face of what they see as the creeping Islamization of the continent, the trouble with Islam does not stem from the behavior of individual Muslims or with doctrine-perverting Muslim extremism, but from the fundamental values of the religion itself. The struggle is therefore one that must be understood as against “Islam as a whole,” and indeed even against “Islam as such.”²⁶

Echoing Huntington's provocative conclusion that “Islam has bloody borders,”²⁷ Palko has suggested that there is an essential doctrinal nexus between Islam and violence: “It is legitimate to ask why

there are no Christian suicide terrorists, but the bag is overflowing with Muslim ones. It is legitimate to call attention to the fact that the borders of Islam are borders of conflict.” Given such threats, Palko told readers of a leading Slovak Catholic review, the domestic political implications should be clear. “It is legitimate, not xenophobic,” he wrote, “to warn of the risk of mass immigration of Muslims to Europe, and it is legitimate to strive to at least slow down that immigration. As interior minister I tried for three years to do that, without success.”²⁸ Palko’s colleague in the KDH, Peter Gabura, has likewise sounded the alarm over the rising influence of Muslims and their religion. Asked by journalists, in the context of a broader discussion over the extent to which Islam “threatens Slovakia,” whether a Slovak child might properly become friends with a Muslim, Gabura responded that while being “steadfast” Christians and “satisfactory patriots” would certainly be required to resist Islam’s influence in his country, the problem did not lie with the Slovaks’ own reception of Muslims: “We are not possessed by hatred. That question should be posed first to the other side: whether it is acceptable for them to make friends with a Christian.”²⁹

To a great extent, Christian political organizations in Eastern Europe take their rhetorical cues from the leadership of their churches, and given the prominence of Catholicism in the region, it is not surprising that the standpoint of Roman Catholic officialdom has also figured significantly in these debates.³⁰ Catholicism, moreover, has a centuries-old tradition of unapologetic engagement with matters political, and with Islam. Pope Benedict XVI, who, as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, was one of the most ardent defenders of Catholic primacy and traditional doctrine, has long taken a rather skeptical, distanced approach to ecumenical tendencies, even where they have arisen *within* the broader Christian community. That being the case, Islam may simply prove to be a monotheism too far.

What most have taken to be the strongest evidence of the Vatican’s disapproval of Islam is Benedict’s September 2006 address to the University of Regensburg in which he quoted (with insufficient distancing if probably not, *pace* the critics, an obvious endorsement) the observation of fourteenth-century Byzantine emperor Manuel II Palaeologos that Mohammad’s religious innovations amounted to “things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.”³¹ In the end, however, the dustup generated far more

controversy than clarity. Despite the (largely unwelcome) attention it focused on the importance of Ratzinger's approach, his views on the Muslim religion and its future in Europe remain anything but certain at this early stage, and his responses to these questions may well be altered somewhat through the exigencies of his new position. Still, there is evidence that he has long judged Islam to be fundamentally incompatible with what he and many Catholics see as European culture, law, and values derived from and indebted to Christianity.³²

It is worth remembering, of course, that Ratzinger heads a church that, as late as the nineteenth century, proudly and defiantly described itself as constitutionally and theologically irreconcilable with a liberal order and unable to "fit into a democratic system." The classic example of institutional Catholicism's resistance to democracy, liberalism, and church-state separation is the Syllabus of Errors attached to the encyclical *Quanta Cura*, promulgated by Pope Pius IX in 1864. There the Vatican insisted that it was erroneous to believe, among other things, that "the Roman Pontiff can, and ought to, *reconcile himself, and come to terms with progress, liberalism and modern civilization.*"³³ That past controversy in many ways mirrors the dilemma said to face Islam today. As such, it stands as a helpful reminder of the capacity of religious traditions, even those that hold themselves out as universal and timeless, to adapt and reform themselves in the face of changing circumstances.

A Chance to Mend the Schisms? Unity and Diversity in the Christian Response to Islam

Troubled by the secularist resistance to affirmations of the Christian heritage in the proposed European Constitution, and seeing this as yet another symptom of "Europe's denial of its religious and moral foundations,"³⁴ Ratzinger has called for the adoption of "a Christian civil religion that can shape our conscience as Europeans and—bridging the separation between secularists and Catholics—manifest the reasonable and binding value of the great principles that have edified Europe and can and must rebuild it."³⁵ While it may appear to be merely a reprise of the old battle with the secularists, the skirmishing over the draft Constitution took place against the backdrop of Europe's relationship

with Islam and was, I conclude, profoundly shaped by that conflict. Here, too, Islam matters.

Indeed, political Catholicism tends to insist that it is precisely the recovery and reassertion of a Christian identity that will best equip Europeans to come to a peaceful *modus vivendi* with Muslims at home and abroad. But, perhaps surprisingly, this is often a stance that seeks to make room *within Europe* for Islam, and even to do so officially as need be. Genuine coexistence will come, it is believed, from an increased respect for and deference to not just Christianity alone, but to religion *per se*, at the expense of the secularism that is seen as the source of a characteristic instability and rootlessness in contemporary European society. Asked if he foresaw the danger of a “clash of civilizations” with Islam, Camillo Cardinal Ruini, then president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, pointed to just this aspect of the engagement with Islam, rejecting any civilizational struggle as “a potential risk that we must do everything to avoid, specifically *by rediscovering and increasing the importance of the Christian identity of Europe*. Because, in the first place, that identity is less alien to Islam than a total Naturalism.”³⁶ Catholic responses of this sort often couple a wariness toward Islam with a grudging admiration for what appears to be the competitor’s superior ability to command allegiance from its followers. In a recent interpretation of Muslim successes, Ratzinger thus noted, with some obvious distress, that “Islam has been reborn, in part because of the new material wealth acquired by the Islamic countries, but mainly because of people’s conviction that Islam can provide a valid spiritual foundation to their lives. Such a foundation seems to have eluded old Europe, which, despite its enduring political and economic power, seems to be on the road to decline and fall.”³⁷ The pope’s sentiments along these lines have had practical political implications. They have been channeled directly into the program materials of the European People’s Party–European Democrats (EPP-ED), a pan-European grouping that has quickly integrated Eastern Europeans into the broader channels of Christian Democratic activism.³⁸ Such ideas, moreover, fit especially well with the agenda of those seeking to re-establish, after the displacement of communism, the primacy of Christianity in their countries.

In comparison to their Catholic counterparts (and to Protestants in the United States), Europe’s various Protestant groups have maintained a rather lower profile on political issues in the recent past. But

their contributions to the Islamic question also prove revealing, as do the solutions they propose, which often bear the stamp of their doctrinal differences, their characteristic views on religious governance and church-state relations, and their distinctive perspectives on pluralism and the “privatization” of religion born of their historical conflict with Catholicism (and with each other).³⁹ On this front, however, evidence from Eastern Europe proves harder to find and weigh, given the relative weakness of Protestant movements in the region. But the importance of the tradition for the New West is indisputable, and Protestantism still affects the East in meaningful, if subtle, ways. In light of the historical significance of the Reformation in the formation of the prevailing secular-liberal cultural and political order, a much deeper inquiry into political Protestants’ reception of Islam should be an important part of the agenda for future scholarship on European religion.

Those predominantly Orthodox societies of Eastern Europe present something of a special case: they are less touched than the Catholic lands by the secularizing effects of the Reformation and the Enlightenment, and they generally lack the fertile Christian Democratic lay tradition born of the Catholic *rapprochement* with electoral democracy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In general, specifically Christian political parties have not fared well in Orthodox countries. Instead, much of the work of political Christianity has fallen historically to members of the Orthodox clergy, who can draw on a time-honored culture of religious identification with the state, albeit in a way that has, until recently, resulted in far less direct participation in politics per se than has been seen in places where Catholic and Protestant commitments prevail. The Orthodox lands are also, of course, where Europeans have come into contact with Muslims most directly and most continuously, and Orthodox perspectives on the nature of Europe, the confines of Europe, and the fate of Islam in Europe are far too important to ignore.⁴⁰

In comparison with the Catholic and (especially) Protestant approaches, the Orthodox tradition has maintained a greater unease with individualism and secularism, and the Orthodox engagement with the new rise of Islam in Europe is infused with this tension between the Orthodox and laic visions of spiritual, social, political, and legal order. The divide is remarkably salient among the various branches of Eastern Christianity, and often seen to be grounded in a theological-

philosophical rupture between what Dragan Subotić has called “the Orthodox God-Made-Human and the European Human-Made-God” (*pravoslavni Bogočovek i evropski čovekobog*).⁴¹ “Europeanness” thus remains, in the Orthodox tradition, a somewhat suspect category.

It is important, however, not to overstate the differences between the Orthodox and their Western Christian counterparts. As Elizabeth Prodromou has noted, both the theological underpinnings of Orthodox belief and the actual historical experiences of Orthodox societies suggest that there is no necessary and fundamental incompatibility between this variant of Christianity and democracy per se. Nevertheless, there are distinctions worth our attention. “History has hardened Orthodoxy’s ambivalence toward competition and difference as features of pluralism,” Prodromou observes, and Orthodox religious and political culture remains noticeably uncomfortable with the “putative Western model of unlimited pluralism” in questions of church-state relations and religious freedom.⁴²

As with other practitioners of European political Christianity, especially in the Catholic camp, Orthodox activists and commentators in Eastern Europe often see the opening created for Islam in Europe—and, perhaps even more importantly, the failure to resist its spread—as directly attributable to the ascension of a religiously neutral, laic order. With such concerns in mind, Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev, the official representative of the Russian Orthodox Church to the institutions of the European Community, complained in 2005 of the multiculturalist double standard that, he alleged, liberal secularists have used to let Muslims and their religion off the hook again and again: “Why does political correctness, whose mores, invented and established by them as the infallible ‘moral code of the builders of a New Europe,’ eschew criticism of Islam but positively encourage denigration of Christianity? Why do we regularly hear of the atrocities of the Inquisition in medieval Spain and the Holocaust in Nazi Germany, but never of the genocide of Armenians or of other Christian peoples in Turkey? Why such prejudice and one-sidedness in the telling of history? Why is Christianity the scapegoat whenever religion is to be made accountable?”⁴³ This unduly indulgent approach to Islam, the bishop claimed, was the work of the same people who had worked to force references to Christianity out of the European Constitution. Notably, however, Alfeyev suggested that the breach between the Orthodox and the allodox in Europe

was anything but total. He saw reason for optimism, and even chances for inter-confessional cooperation, in the creation of possible alliances with Jewish and Islamic communities to resist secularism.⁴⁴ As seen in the thought of many critics from the other Christian traditions as well, the assumptions underlying this view are, quite plainly, that religiosity per se (or at least Abrahamic monotheism per se—the Russian Church in particular is none too fond of the “new religions”) is a healthy cultural trait that official Europe should welcome and aid, and that the elevation of Christianity to something closer to its former privileged, protected, and state-sponsored position would, in fact, satisfy and pacify European Muslims to a far greater extent than *laissez-faire* secularism could ever hope to do.

Such occasional acknowledgments of common interests with Islam notwithstanding, there is evidence that the leaders of political Orthodoxy are frequently inclined to react to Islam with distrust and resentment. The tendency to see Muslims as present or potential enemies has, not surprisingly, proven most apparent and most potent among Serbs. Serbian Orthodox perspectives show considerable variation, to be sure, but the intensity at the negative end of the spectrum seems unmatched elsewhere: the exponents of religiously grounded politics have interpreted the violence of the past two decades as a vindication of Orthodox fears of Muslim extremism, strengthening their conviction of the righteousness of resistance to Islam. Since the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Orthodox commentary on South Slav politics and the struggle with Islam in particular has evinced an especially defiant, militant martyrology, as seen repeatedly, for example, in the review *Pravoslavljje* (Orthodoxy), one of the leading official organs of the Serbian church.⁴⁵ Likewise *Logos*, the student journal of the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Belgrade, has at times served as a conduit for markedly anti-Islamic sentiments,⁴⁶ with one commentator insisting, for example, that ecumenism had reached its limits in the encounter with Islam, with which the Orthodox shared no “common faith.”⁴⁷

Reflecting the deeper Orthodox discomfort with prevailing contemporary notions of Europeanness,⁴⁸ such critics have faulted the secular West for its abandonment of Christianity in the face of what should have been recognized as clear threats to not just Serb but broader European interests; Europe has failed its longtime defenders on the borders of Islam, but it has also betrayed itself. In the midst

of the Bosnian conflict in 1994, for example, the Montenegrin Metropolitan Amfilohije Radović called out for support of the Bosnian Serbs' breakaway Republika Srpska, lambasting not just Yugoslavia's "godless" government for its perceived inaction but also the "civilized Europe" that was killing those "who had defended it with their bones... [and was] with its traitorous brotherly hand, tightening a cord of Turkish silk around their necks in the hope that it [would] in this way finally strangle the Serbian Orthodox existence in Bosnia-Herzegovina."⁴⁹ The events of 9/11 have fueled this fire, bolstering Serb claims that present-day Islamic terrorism and the Muslim ethnonational politics of the former Yugoslav lands are of a piece, originating in the same Islamist drive to power that the Serbs had warned of desperately but that the West ignored.

Serb advocates of Christian politics may be the most agitated about the perceived Muslim threat, but they are not alone. At a time when the new-yet-old "civilizational" conflict is seen increasingly as setting the Islamic world against the New West, residents of other Eastern European countries with substantial and well-established Muslim populations—Russia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Montenegro, and to a lesser extent Romania and Ukraine—seem increasingly worried not just about the obvious security issues and Islamist radicalism, but also about the less tangible but still critically important implications of Islam for the Europeaness and future cohesion of their societies.⁵⁰ The significant Muslim communities in Russia, for example, are a matter of mounting concern in that country, which since the collapse of the Soviet Union has struggled to find an acceptable regulatory structure for its new and (*de facto* if not *de jure*) more pluralistic religious economy and, at the same time, to check the threat of Islamism and restrict the channels through which it might spread. Here the chief interlocutor in Christian politics has been, quite naturally, the Russian Orthodox Church, which has taken an assertive stance in attempting to reclaim its traditional privileges and rebuild its relationship with both the Russian state and the broader population, a population that saw its connections to Orthodoxy erode during seven decades of communist religious suppression.

The secularization seen in Russian society developed for reasons rather different from those that are responsible for the classic West-

ern European pattern (though now, after communism, it may well be maintained by much the same forces as those found in the West). Nevertheless, even after the disappearance of communism, that secularization imposes real limits on the prospects for Christian politics. The Russian Church recognizes that, for the time being at least, it works in a world of diminished possibilities. In such circumstances, an appealing fallback option has been to weld the Church to the idea of national loyalty and to present Orthodoxy as an inextricable constituent element of Russianness.

As regards the country's large Muslim minorities, this has often meant support for something akin to the German demand for the acceptance of a *Leitkultur*, whereby Muslim loyalties might be trumped by the genuine, national, traditional culture of Russian Orthodoxy. Along these lines, one Russian archbishop, speaking on the church-state questions engendered by the encounter with Islam, emphasized for a Serbian Orthodox audience (with, no doubt, many similar concerns) that the traditions of Eastern Christianity must come first: "[O]ur state is created on the basis of Orthodox values, and every person who considers himself cultured must have a command of those values."⁵¹ This did not mean, he reassured his audience, that the Russian state should seek to ban Islam. (The fact that a restriction on Islam was even thinkable for a highly placed cleric in the Orthodox Church—which has supported drastic impositions on the ability of foreign and non-traditional religious groups to proselytize on Russian territory—speaks to the vastly different logics of institutional power and competence with which both the Russian Church and the Russian state continue to operate. "Religious freedom" still means something special in Russia, something not quite "European," and certainly something far removed from the American model.) While the archbishop thus steered clear of any proposals for limits on Islam, he insisted that the culture of Russian Orthodoxy must be taught in public schools, and that it be required of all students, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike. If Russia's Muslims wished to organize religious instruction for their children, they should be free to do so. But at the same time, he cautioned, "those same Muslim children must be familiar with the culture that forms the foundation of the state in which they live. That is the position we are advocating."⁵²

“This Is Europe, Whether You Like It or Not”: Conclusions and Beginnings

Despite their divergent histories, Russians thus find themselves confronting Islam in a posture not unlike that of their counterparts in the West, and proposing solutions not all that different from those offered up by political Christians in, for example, the Netherlands and Germany. Does evidence like this suggest that a new, expanded, and more unified Europe is being created through the perception of a shared conflict with Islam?

To some extent, such a convergence in values, approaches, and tactics has indeed been taking place since 1989. To be sure, that process has been easier for the majority-Catholic societies of Eastern Europe, and it will likely be so for the near future. But as the examples of Romania and Bulgaria have shown (and Greece before them), the institutional and cultural “club” that is the European Union has no great trouble accommodating Orthodox societies, and Orthodox societies certainly need not be irreconcilable to the secularized, post-Christian political order that prevails in the older European core. What appears thus far to be the successful incorporation of these Orthodox countries raises, in turn, the prospect that other homes to Eastern Christianity, such as Ukraine, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and perhaps even Russia, might with time find themselves securely situated in the New West.

On what terms that joinder might take place, however, remains an open question and a matter of dispute. In the more resolutely anti-Muslim or at least Islamoskeptic cultures such as those of Serbia and Russia, exponents of religious politics tend to insist that the future lies in a common recognition of the threat of Islam and the retrieval of a pan-Christian heritage steeped in the truths and myths of resistance against a shared enemy. Should future developments run in that direction (and as we have seen here, there are those in the Western Christian communities who wish it so), this might be one important way in which the Orthodox world is brought into a closer concert with its Protestant and Catholic kindred. But strong countervailing forces also shape this history. Orthodox misgivings about Islam and about the European laic order may gradually soften in the face of powerful incentives for “Europeanization” and continuing pressures to conform to

more pluralist, even multiculturalist models and values, pressures that come both from the secular-liberal camp and, critically, from supporters of political Christianity within the European Union, who are more natural potential allies of their Orthodox counterparts. In either case, there is reason to think that the supposed civilizational “dividing line” between Eastern and Western Christianity might not hold.

But what are the limits of pluralism? If Orthodoxy may find ways to “fit” in Europe, can Islam as well? In the face of that burning question, Europe’s answers in recent decades have been, as in centuries past, in a state of continual revision and negotiation. This much is certain: the politics of Christianity has been and will continue to be crucial to the formulation of those answers, even in the post-Christian, markedly secularized Europe of contemporary times.

The evidence of the last few decades suggests that, with regard to many aspects of the problem, Europe’s political Christians still find themselves at a great remove from anything resembling unanimity on the approach to Islam. While most of them would argue that there is indeed a genuine, enduring cultural-political identity, rooted in Christianity, that makes Europe truly “Europe,” they disagree about the implications of that identity for Muslim outsiders or aspirants to European citizenship. On the sticky problem of Islam’s potential for integration into a system of European values and norms, the response of Christian politics ranges from optimistic ecumenical proclamations of shared values and abundant common ground, through uncertain mixtures of neighborly *caritas* with lingering doubt and worry about the alien features of Islamic culture, to more rigid and militant denials of Islam’s capacity to coexist with democracy and with liberal understandings of human rights and freedoms.

There are some common threads. Practitioners and theoreticians of Christian politics can and generally do agree that secularism has debased or at least de-centered European culture and thereby left Europe vulnerable to Islam and Islamism. And they find concord in the principle that an acknowledgment of Europe’s Christian foundations, and a renewed emphasis on the primacy of Christian values and culture, must be central to the response to Islam. Moreover, they see the encounter with Islam, and the threat it seems to pose, as an opportunity for Christianity, a way to move their own tradition back toward the heart of European public life.

But these Christian politicians remain unsure and divided as to the most promising avenues to those ends, and their attitudes, rhetoric, and tone show remarkable variety. While the international community that I call the New West is bound together not simply by a real or nominal faith tradition but by common economic, military, and political interests, as well as by cultural concerns that have little or nothing to do with religion, some promoters of a Christian vision of politics see renewed engagement with Islam as the tie that binds. Yet it is far from certain that this “civilizational” perspective, grounded in a religious notion of the origins of culture, will carry the day (or the decade, or the century). Up to this point, such views have won widespread support, but there has also been considerable resistance to the culture-clash approach, even within the Christian circles that presumably should be the prime carriers and defenders of “the Christian Civilization of the West.”

In spite of the occasional seeming victories of secularization, secularism, and the new incursions of Islam, political Christianity has not retired from the field. On the contrary, these new circumstances have invigorated it in many ways. As the evidence reviewed here suggests, political Christians continue to claim that European culture, law, and policy must be—indeed, to the extent that they remain genuinely European, inescapably *are*—grounded in their religious tradition. As Europe’s East has retrieved and re-forged its own history of political Christianity after 1989, such assertions have been widespread and, in some quarters and at some times, especially forceful, as citizens seek to make up for the time lost under communism and counter what they see as the threats posed by newly energized Muslim communities.

With their distinctive histories and concerns, the peoples of Eastern Europe will be exceptionally important in shaping the broader patterns of the response to Islam in the New West. At present, Islam still looms as a vague abstraction for many East Europeans, but this is almost certainly bound to change, and advocates of Christian politics have alerted to that fact. Alongside some important tendencies toward convergence, there remain real differences between East and West. In the ex-communist countries, for example, an insistence on the stalwart defense of European values and norms appears to dominate the field of public discussion more effectively than in Western Europe. It is not that Western Europeans do not traffic in such rhetoric. They clearly do. It is perhaps more difficult to find representatives of Western Eu-

ropean political Christian movements who deploy inflammatory anti-Muslim language, but not inordinately so. The East has no monopoly on extremism.

Rather, the determining factor seems to be that the political communities of Eastern Europe have had, thus far, rather less in the way of strong alternative traditions to draw on. Despite rapid democratization since 1989, Eastern Europe is still coming to terms with both the subtle and the not-so-subtle disciplining experiences of plural(ist) society that are found in, and to a great extent demanded by, its partners in Western Europe and North America. The region remains, in particular, deeply skeptical of multiculturalism and of the so-called “political correctness” associated with it. This wariness is a legacy of communist rule in some measure, but it also results from a tighter linkage, at least in the modern period, between what have been imagined to be the defining features of the political community and those of an ethnic monoculture with either true dominance or aspirations to it. And whereas Germany’s recent past now makes the idea of this kind of *Leitkultur* seem potentially dangerous even to Germans themselves, for many (though not all) of the East European countries the concept is, even if not named as such, so much a matter of official affirmation and everyday lived experience that it seems utterly natural. These societies are not, of course, fated to be more attached to the nation than their Western neighbors. Until recently, however, the trajectories of their political development have tended to deprive them of powerful pluralistic considerations that could counterbalance an emphasis on the ethnonational.

But change is afoot, and European integration and the cultural obligations of membership in the New West may mute the most extreme tendencies. East Europeans have made their opinions known and will continue to do so. Yet there is reason to believe that the moderating and homogenizing influences of broader New West collectivities, such as, in the case of the Christian Democratic orientation, the EPP-ED group in the European Parliament, will soften the harsher formulations of some of Eastern Europe’s political Christians, like the Slovak Christian Democrat Vladimír Palko’s frank talk of a cultural “war” as the more or less inevitable result of problems inherent in “Islam as such.” The Vatican, too, will play a crucial role: Benedict XVI’s uncertain future line may temper the tone of the debate or, should it run in another direction, it may offer cover and license for those who seek more

confrontational terms. Here, however, the less complete integration of Eastern Orthodox Christianity may continue to pose some stumbling blocks, as political Christians in the Orthodox tradition are sometimes reluctant to take their lead from those considered outsiders, which the leaders and opinion-makers of the West remain for many of them.

Examining the role of religious values among the many varieties of European Christianity, and among the many varieties of Islam, might seem to run the risk of reifying the intellectual and political constructs of the culture warriors. But we need not (and cannot afford to) shy away from asking these questions. Love it or hate it, in one particular respect the Huntingtonian conception is right: religion *is* central to the questions at hand. This certainly has been, moreover, the prevailing assumption among those who come to these debates from the Muslim world.⁵³ Yet as important as these ongoing contributions to Islamic thought are, there is now a clear and urgent need for the parallel recognition of a specifically Christian side to the Muslim-Christian encounter—an acknowledgment that, in this relationship, it is not simply Islam that matters. Understanding the interaction between the two purportedly civilizational lineages will require, in turn, a careful exploration of how the politics of Christianity has positioned Islam and its followers against a notional “Europe” that is understood, in the dominant views, to have its roots in the Christian tradition.

Such a redirection of the inquiry promises a far deeper appreciation of how religion and the religious—the guardians of a remnant Christendom, as it were—have helped construct the common images of Islam in European public discourse. Just as importantly, it allows us to move beyond the easy stereotypes and reductionisms, and beyond the conviction of the clash inevitable, to see the rich variety of ways in which those Europeans who continue to ground their politics in religion have reacted to the new salience, and the new salients, of Islam.

NOTES

- 1 Acknowledgments: Many people contributed to the preparation of this essay and the ideas presented here. In particular, I would like to thank Bruce Berglund and Brian Porter-Szűcs not only for their great contributions to my own work but also for their vision for the larger, collective scholarly

project of which it is a part. Students in my various courses on Europe and Islam at the University of California, San Diego, have been a discerning and most helpful audience, as have the participants in UCSD's European Studies Program. I am also grateful for the assistance I received from readers of and commenters on earlier versions of the article, including Mark Pittaway, Mills Kelly, Susanne Hillman, Andrea Westermann, and all the members of the two gatherings on Christianity and Eastern Europe that gave rise to this volume.

- 2 Vladimír Palko, "Sme vo vojne s islamom?" *Impulz: Revue pre modernú katolícku kultúru* 2, no. 4 (2006), available online at <http://www.impulzrevue.sk/article.php?156> (last accessed August 19, 2006). Unless otherwise noted, all translations from foreign sources are my own.
- 3 Josip Sabol, "Politički Islam—prijetnja današnjoj civilizaciji (4)," *Glas koncila* no. 11 (1603), March 13, 2005, also available online at www.glas-koncila.hr/rubrike_teoloski.html?news_ID=3163 (last accessed August 19, 2007).
- 4 Srdja (Srđa, Serge) Trifković, "Ako porozumiet' islamu," *Impulz: Revue pre modernú katolícku kultúru*, no. 2 (2006), available online at www.impulzrevue.sk/article.php?111 (last accessed July 30, 2007).
- 5 See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 69–72. There Huntington identifies the following "key institutions, practices, and beliefs" as "the core of Western civilization"—not unique to the West, he says, but uniquely combined and uniquely consistent in it. These are a foundation in the Classical inheritance of Greek and Roman thought; the values and historical legacy of Catholicism and Protestantism; the distinctiveness of European languages; the separation of spiritual and temporal power; deference to the rule of law; a potent pluralism that accommodates social diversity and nurtures civil society; a reliance on representative governance; and individualism. See also Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22–49.
- 6 Such groupings have figured prominently in many Western European societies, where they continue to attract a substantial following and have often commanded substantial electoral pluralities and led parliamentary coalitions. The most important of these would include, for example, Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Christian Social Union (CSU), the Netherlands' Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), Austria's Peoples' Party (ÖVP), and the various splintered successors to Italy's *democristiani* traditions. These comparatively well-studied political tendencies of the European West have similarly significant if less well-known counterparts in various East European states as well. There they include such important groups as the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), the New Slovenia Party (NSi), and several Slovak Christian Democratic parties, including the Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), the Conservative Democrats of Slovakia (KDS), and the Slovak Democratic and

Christian Union (SDKÚ). Arguably the right-nationalist Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) and Poland's various center-right parties should also be included, though these latter groups, while clearly courting religious voters and making direct appeals to Christian values, have sometimes positioned themselves more ambiguously when it comes to any formal religious affiliation. Bridging the old East–West split are supranational alliances such as the European People's Party–European Democrats (EPP–ED), a multinational umbrella organization in the Christian Democratic tradition, organized to promote coordination of Christian center-right interests at the level of the European Parliament.

- 7 Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" 30.
- 8 See, e.g., Robert J. Donia and John V.A. Fine, Jr., *Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Tradition Betrayed* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Donia, *Sarajevo: A Biography* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).
- 9 Zsolt Semjén, "Magunkat büntetnénk, ha..." *Új Ember* 60, no. 23 (June 6, 2004). Semjén's party, the *Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt* or KDNP, has been a partner of the leading right-wing Fidesz faction, and by 2006 the KDNP had itself become the third largest political grouping in the Hungarian parliament.
- 10 "Pastiersky List Biskupov Slovenska o Európskej Integrácii," September 15, 2002, published in English translation on the official web site of the Roman Catholic Church in Slovakia, <http://www.kbs.sk/?cid=1117564487> (last accessed July 30, 2007).
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Committed secularists, in seeking to minimize religious influence in the public sphere, tend to shy away from reliance on Christianity as a constitutive element of the European cultural and political system. Yet some do credit the development of that system to what is seen as Christianity's inherent doctrinal acknowledgment of temporal and spiritual domains. And there is no shortage of secularists who suggest, like the ex-Muslim Dutch politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali, that the Islamic faith itself poses special threats to Europe's laic order. Others, however, see threats to the liberal order on all sides and emphasize common tropes and urges in the "fundamentalisms" of the various religious traditions. Along these lines, see Caroline Fourest and Fiammetta Venner, *Tirs croisés: La laïcité à l'épreuve des intégrismes juif, chrétien et musulman* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2003).
- 13 On the nature of Islamic law and the conceptual unity of spiritual and temporal power in Islam, see, e.g., Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005); Lewis, *What Went Wrong?*, 107–129. For an influential popular account, see Reza Aslan, *No God But God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam* (New York: Random House, 2006), 162–170, 260–266.
- 14 See Oriana Fallaci, *The Rage and the Pride* (New York: Rizzoli, 2002); Fallaci, *The Force of Reason* (New York: Rizzoli, 2006).

- 15 See, e.g., the contributions of German Catholic clerics and theologians collected in Reinhard Löw, ed., *Islam und Christentum in Europa* (Hildesheim: Bernward, 1994).
- 16 This is, for example, the interpretation promoted by Serge Trifković, a Serbian-American publicist with the Rockford Institute, an organization devoted to defending the “Christian West,” destroying the “false idols of contemporary culture,” and propagating “the authentic alternative—a Christian civilization that is also rooted in the classical tradition.” See <http://www.rockfordinstitute.org> (last accessed August 14, 2007). Trifković, whose opinions are widely cited in anti-Muslim publications and web sites in Europe and the United States, warns of a dire Muslim threat to European identity and security and offers a scathing critique that lays the blame for violent and illiberal tendencies among Muslims on the essential tenets of the religion itself. See, e.g., Trifković, *The Sword of the Prophet: Islam: History, Theology, Impact on the World* (Boston: Regina Orthodox Press, 2002). Despite its base in the United States, the work of the Rockford Institute is relevant here as well. It cultivates ties with activists abroad, and its vocal challenge to Islam has proven popular in East European circles, and notably in Serbia, where the group has enlisted the cooperation of Darko Tanasković, one of Serbia’s most prominent academic specialists on Islam. Tanasković, who has served as Belgrade’s ambassador to Turkey and to the Vatican, is himself a longstanding proponent of the idea of Islam as a menace to Serb and European interests.
- 17 Wolfgang Schäuble, “Europe’s Culture: Unity in Diversity,” Speech at the Berlin Conference “A Soul for Europe,” November 17–19, 2006, reprinted at http://www.berlinerkonferenz.eu/uploads/media/Speech_Schaeuble_061119_01.pdf (emphasis added) (last accessed July 26, 2007).
- 18 The CDA’s “values and norms” campaign goes well beyond issues of immigration and multiculturalism, however. See, e.g., the pieces collected in *Christian-Democratic Political Observations: Political Philosophical Remarks on Current Issues* (The Hague: Eduardo Frei Foundation/Wetenschappelijk Instituut voor het CDA, 2002); Ernst M.H. Hirsch Ballin and Thijs Jansen, untitled comment, *The Responsive Community* 14, nos. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2004): 15–18.
- 19 References are to Sabol, “Politički Islam—prijetnja današnjoj civilizaciji (4),” *Glas koncila* no. 11 (1603), March 13, 2005. Sabol’s analysis appears in the conclusion of a four-part series under the same title; see also *Glas koncila* no. 8 (1600), February 20, 2005; no. 9 (1601), February 27, 2005; and no. 10 (1602), March 6, 2005.
- 20 The essay that Brian Porter-Szűcs presented at the Warsaw conference, “Giving unto Caesar: Catholic Political Theology in Modern Poland,” discussed the ideology and tactics of the Law and Justice Party and Radio Maryja in the context of Poland’s political and religious history. Aleks Szczerbiak, “‘Social Poland’ Defeats ‘Liberal Poland’? The September–October 2005 Polish Parliamentary and Presidential Elections,” *Journal*

- of *Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 23, no. 2 (2007): 203–232, esp. 213, 218. Those who are (unlike me) skilled readers of Polish will find an elaborate exposition of the party's religious vision in the program document "Polska Katolicka w chrześcijańskiej Europie," published by the Komitet Wyborczy Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, Warsaw, 2005, http://www.pis.org.pl/download.php?g=mmedia&f=broszura_katolicka.pdf (last accessed July 23, 2007).
- 21 Address of President Lech Kaczyński to a state dinner in honor of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, June 25, 2007, published on the web site of the President of the Republic of Poland, <http://www.president.pl/x.node?id=2011993&eventId=11028192> (last accessed October 12, 2007). The PiS party's ordinary tone of Catholic triumphalism was conspicuously absent from the president's remarks: "Today we welcome the monarch of one of the most powerful and influential countries of the Middle East. But we welcome today the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques—a person who plays a special role in the Muslim faith, in Islam, that is to say, a religion which is one of so-called 'religions of the book.' It involves today millions of people around the world, from Europe to Indonesia and Malaysia, to Africa as well as the United States and South America. Hence Your Royal Highness deserves from us, from a Christian nation, the words of respect for the religion of Your Royal Highness, the religion of Your fellow countrymen and the religion, as I said a moment ago, of hundreds of millions of other people... Observing the customs of Islam I would like to raise this glass of water to Your Royal Highness."
 - 22 Adam Krzemiński, "View from the Vistula," Signandsight online, March 8, 2007, <http://www.signandsight.com/features/1242.html> (last accessed July 23, 2007) (signandsight.com is the English-language service of the major German online cultural and literary review perlentaucher.de).
 - 23 Ibid.
 - 24 Palko, "Sme vo vojne s islamom?"
 - 25 Ibid.
 - 26 Ibid.
 - 27 Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" 35. See also Huntington's defense of the claim in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, 258: "No single statement in my *Foreign Affairs* article attracted more critical comment than 'Islam has bloody borders.' I made that judgment on the basis of a casual survey of intercivilizational conflicts. Quantitative evidence from every disinterested source conclusively demonstrates its validity."
 - 28 Vladimír Palko, "Prorokov turban a sloboda prejavu," *Impulz: Revue pre modernú katolícku kultúru*, 2006, no. 1.
 - 29 Slávka Habrmanová and Tatiana Novotná, "Peter Gabura: Mám tretieho adepta na šéfa KDH," *Hospodárske noviny* online, April 2, 2007, <http://hn.hnonline.sk/c1-20801870-mam-tretieho-adepta-na-sefa-kdh> (last accessed August 20, 2007).

- 30 The concerns of Croatia's Vinko Cardinal Puljić on the threat to Bosnia from Islamicization, for example, find strong parallels in the opinions of lay activists and Christian Democratic politicians. See Luigi Geninazzi, "Il cardinale Puljic: Islam, una sfida per l'Europa" (interview with Vinko Cardinal Puljić), *Avvenire*, October 4, 2002, reprinted at <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/dettaglio.jsp?id=7662> (last accessed August 2, 2007).
- 31 Pope Benedict XVI, address to the Representatives of Science, University of Regensburg, September 12, 2006, official Vatican translation, published at Zenit News Agency web site, <http://www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=94748> (last accessed November 11, 2006), citing Théodore Khoury, "Manuel II Paléologue, Entretiens avec un Musulman. 7e Controverse," *Sources Chrétiennes* no. 115 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966).
- 32 See, e.g., Joseph Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth: Christianity and the Catholic Church at the End of the Millennium: An Interview with Peter Seewald*, trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997). See also Sandro Magister, "Islam and Democracy, a Secret Meeting at Castelgandolfo," published on the <http://www.chiesa> web site, January 23, 2006, www.chiesa.espressonline.it/dettaglio.jsp?id=45084&eng=y (last accessed August 14, 2007).
- 33 Pope Pius IX, Syllabus of Errors, appendix to the encyclical *Quanta Cura*, December 8, 1864, paragraph 80, from the translation published at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/P9SYLL.HTM> (emphasis added).
- 34 Joseph Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Roots of Europe," in Joseph Ratzinger and Marcello Pera, *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*, trans. Michael F. Moore (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 65. The text is a translation of Ratzinger's address to the Italian Senate on May 13, 2004.
- 35 Ratzinger, "Letter to Marcello Pera," in Ratzinger and Pera, *Without Roots*, 135.
- 36 "Diavolo edonista" (interview with Camillo Cardinal Ruini), *L'Espresso* no. 50–51, December 12–19, 2002, reprinted on the Catholic web site Totustuus Network, <http://www.totustuus.net/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=153> (last accessed July 26, 2007) (emphasis added).
- 37 Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Roots of Europe," 64–65.
- 38 See Jaime Mayor Oreja, "Europe: A Story of Freedom," April 2005, in Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament (EPP-ED), *Our Vision of Europe in 2020* (Brussels: Delta Publishing, 2006), 161–166. Mayor Oreja writes: "Not a few voices are beginning to warn us, rightly, that the renaissance of Islam is fed in part by the awareness that it can offer a solid spiritual foundation which fills the void being created in this area in Europe." *Ibid.*, 162.
- 39 An intriguing French Protestant interpretation, which argues that a continent-wide extension of something like the characteristic French *laïcité* could both reform Islam and save Europe from another wave of religious strife, is found in Jeanne Hélène Kaltenbach and Pierre-Patrick

- Kaltenbach, *La France: Une chance pour l'Islam* (Paris: Éditions du Félin, 1991).
- 40 On the baleful influence of the Serbian Orthodox and Croatian Catholic churches in the violent conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, see, e.g., Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Michael Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).
 - 41 Dragan Subotić, "Pravoslavni Bogočovek i evropski čovekobog—mogućnosti za toleranciju ili ekumenizam," in Bogdan Đurović, ed., *Religija i razvoj* (Niš: JUNIR, 1995), 79–84.
 - 42 Elizabeth Prodromou, "The Ambivalent Orthodox," *Journal of Democracy* 15, no. 2 (April 2004): 66, 73. Although Prodromou does not address the Orthodox encounter with Islam in detail, her analysis suggests reasons why the Orthodox stance in this regard will likely prove more difficult to interpret or even discern: "To date," she concludes on page 64, "Orthodoxy has not joined Catholicism and Protestantism in laying out a theological framework to explain and justify its global political engagements. This 'theory gap' is among the reasons why Orthodoxy's approach to engagement in democratization around the world has had a largely ad hoc quality, and likewise, why the links between Orthodoxy and democracy have remained largely outside the scope of comparative analysis, whether by scholars or democratic practitioners."
 - 43 Hilarion Alfeyev, "European Christianity and the Challenge of Militant Secularism," *Ecumenical Review* 57, no. 1 (January 2005): 85.
 - 44 Ibid.
 - 45 See, e.g., Lj. S. (only author's initials given), "Dar služenja spasenju drugih," *Pravoslavlje* 37, no. 871 (July 1, 2003): 5.
 - 46 See, e.g., "Kroz prizmu 'Logosa': sa uredničkog stola," *Logos: časopis studenata Pravoslavnog bogoslovskeg fakulteta u Beogradu* 4, nos. 1–4 (1994): 7–12; Zeljko Poznanović, "Ili Jevandjelje ili Kuran," *Logos* 4, nos. 1–4 (1994): 51–53; Poznanović, "Hristos nije pacifista," *Logos* 4, nos. 1–4 (1994): 54–56; Poznanović, "Kad sveci marširaju," *Logos* 4, nos. 1–4 (1994): 57–59. The pieces by Poznanović first appeared in the popular Belgrade magazine *Duga* in May and June 1994.
 - 47 Boban Milenković, "'Zajednička vera' hrišćana sa ostalim monoteistima—san ili java," *Logos* 4, nos. 1–4 (1994): 41–50.
 - 48 See, e.g., [Protojerej] Ljubivoje Stojanović, "Svetosavlje i evropejstvo," *Glasnik: službeni list Srpske pravoslavne crkve* 84, no. 2 (February 2002): 33–35. See also the range of Orthodox and other viewpoints collected in Radovan Bigović, ed., *Hrišćanstvo i evropske integracije* (Belgrade: Hrišćanski kulturni centar and Heleta, 2003).
 - 49 Amfilohije, Orthodox Metropolitan of Montenegro-Primorska, "Pilatovske ruke bezbožnika," *Logos* 4, nos. 1–4 (1994): 19–21 (communiqué issued August 8, 1994).

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- 50 See, e.g., Mary Neuburger, *The Orient Within: Muslim Minorities and the Negotiation of Nationhood in Modern Bulgaria* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004). It is not clear how much worry over such issues has arisen among the Catholic and Orthodox populations in Albania, another country with a very large Muslim population. It is certain, however, that the purported Islamicization of the Albanians, both in Albania proper and in Kosovo, is a matter of considerable concern for political Christians elsewhere.
- 51 “Samo Pravoslavlje može obnoviti Rusiju,” (interview with Anthony, Archbishop of the Krasnoyarsk-Yenisei diocese), *Pravoslavlje* 38, no. 900 (September 15, 2004): 12.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 See, e.g., Tariq Ramadan, *Islam, le Face à Face des Civilisations: Quel projet pour quelle modernité?* (Lyon: Tahwid, 1995); Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). On Ramadan’s alleged “double discourse” of covert Islamism, see Caroline Fourest, *Frère Tariq: discours, stratégie et méthode de Tariq Ramadan* (Paris: B. Grasset, 2004).

Drafting a Historical Geography of East European Christianity

BRUCE R. BERGLUND

What distinguishes Christianity in Eastern Europe? In the meetings and conversations leading to these essays, contributors to this project have turned repeatedly to this question. Can we identify patterns of religiosity in the region that are distinct from those in Western Europe? How has Eastern Europe's differing pace of industrialization, urbanization, education, and consumption affected church institutions and religious life? And what of the churches' and individual Christians' relationships to nationalist movements, to authoritarian regimes, to groups engaged in ethnic violence and groups engaged in political resistance—have these important players in Eastern Europe's modern history been decisive in the experience and understanding of Christianity? Might we even ask, as did one participant in the project, whether the decades of communist rule—the key distinguishing factor between Europe East and West—were as significant to the region's religious history as is generally assumed? Perhaps we should look instead at developments across the postwar continent: the growth of the welfare state, the movement of women into the workplace, the expansion of education, the housing of families in high-density apartment blocks, and the saturating advance of popular culture. One might argue that these broader European trends, rather than the social and political features we typically associate with Eastern Europe, have been more significant in shaping Christian belief and practice in the region.

Of course, in asking what distinguishes the expression of Christianity in Eastern Europe, we also stir the question of what distinguishes "Eastern Europe." Historians, political scientists, and geographers mark and label this region in various ways, defining it by lagging economic and demographic development, traditions of governance that

emphasize state power over social autonomy, and the legacies of colliding empires, religions, and nations.¹ Others have countered that the term “Eastern Europe” is an orientalist projection, used by French travelers, American journalists, and British comics to diminish the region as the backward foil to the civilized West.² This essay does not propose a defense of this regional descriptor, or attempt to connect the characteristic features of the region’s political, economic, and social history to some manifestation in the practice of Christianity. Instead, this essay insists simply that Eastern Europe does exist as a place. It is a conceptual place, with no visible boundaries or objective features, yet it remains fixed in most people’s geographic imaginations.³ Generally identifiable and packed with meaning, Eastern Europe is a place that journalists cover, tour groups visit, and policy makers debate. And, as a place, it can influence religious belief and practice. Cultural geographers teach us that perceptions of place have bearing on daily practices and broad worldviews. We can ask then how people’s sense of location, their understandings of place—as citizens of Łódź, as West Ukrainians, as Slovaks, as East Europeans—interconnect with their religious imagination and expressions. Brian Porter-Szűcs’s introductory essay challenges us to think of religions not as historical actors but as arenas of ideas and imaginings, daily habits and seasonal ritual. Geographers caution us to do the same when thinking about regions. This essay seeks to bring together these two flexible frames, proposing that we look at Christianity as communities, institutions, and cultural phenomena produced and reproduced by people who inhabit specific locales and are shaped by ideas of place.

Historians of Eastern Europe are no strangers to the importance of geography. We conduct our work with a folio of maps committed to memory, ever ready to reference the cat’s cradle of political boundaries, the changing fates of regions like Bessarabia, Silesia, and Subcarpathian Rus, the distribution of ethno-linguistic groups, and the whereabouts of cities like Lemberg and L’viv, Kolozsvár and Cluj, Adrianople and Edirne. In recent years, some scholars of the region have waded deeper into the methods of geography, incorporating that discipline’s questions and insights into studies that approach space as a category of analysis or that look beyond the national territory as the standard spatial frame.⁴ Likewise, scholars of religion have been alert

to interconnections between expressions of belief and spatial relations, the construction of place, and the contingency of locale. Although “geography of religion” remains a marginal field, scholars in that discipline, as well as theologians, historians of religion, anthropologists, and political scientists, have argued persuasively for the importance of place in religious practice and the religious imagination.⁵ Theologian Walter Brueggemann, for example, argues that the Israelites’ attachment to the land given by God is the central theme of the Bible and hence of biblical faith. In arguing for a sense of place, a meaningful rootedness, as a principal category of faith, Brueggemann offers a succinct, usable definition of the concept:

“Space” means an arena of freedom, without coercion or accountability, free of pressures and void of authority... But “place” is a different matter. Place is a space that has historical meanings, where some things have happened that are now remembered and that provide continuity and identity across generations. Place is space in which important words have been spoken that have established identity, defined vocation, and envisioned destiny. Place is space in which vows have been exchanged, promises have been made, and demands have been issued.⁶

The themes of landlessness, settlement, dispossession, and exile that Brueggemann explores in the biblical account of Israel are familiar to the student of Eastern Europe. With its past of imperial rule and struggles for national sovereignty, the drawing and redrawing of boundaries, and the migration and displacement of peoples, the region’s cultural and political history abounds with odes and oaths to a group’s place or territory. Oftentimes, these expressions of yearning or declarations of possession have been colored with imagery and language taken from the narrative of biblical Israel, church history, or Christian theology. This melding of religious imagery and spatial claims indicates, on the one hand, how deeply felt are the bonds to territory in Eastern Europe. A people’s land is given by God: its beauty and fruit signs of blessing. At the same time, understandings of place, the marking of boundaries, and the longing for rootedness have influenced the practice of Christianity and the imaginings of the divine. In a region where specific sites

and swaths of land have been subjects of dispute, belief in a sacramental connection or covenantal pact, sealed at that patch of earth, have turned groups into the chosen and God into their protector—with a corresponding effect on the rituals and expressions of the faith.

But the intersections of place and religiosity are not limited to a group's devotion to a nationalized, and presumably God-given, territory. Sub-national and local identities also shape religious imagination and practice, as does an understanding of one's place in the broader region of Eastern Europe. People of this region are aware of their location on the periphery. Accession to the European Union and NATO has not erased a conceptual geography that places the states of Eastern Europe on the margin relative to the western core of "Europe." Indeed, the financial crisis of 2008–2009 has magnified this distance.⁷ But, if "Europe" is defined by prosperity, political stability, and secularized societies and culture, then locating oneself on an outside edge prompts some response to those characteristics. For many in the region, greater material comfort, more reliable administrations, and an embrace of secularism are desired signs of Europeanness. At the same time, however, some voices cast a critical eye on these defining traits of the longed-for "Europe," in particular the apparent soullessness emerging from secularism. Amidst the ongoing debate over some common European identity and heritage, these observers—clergy and Christian politicians, as well as non-religious intellectuals—have cast Eastern Europe as a place where religious tradition, awareness of the transcendent, and respect of deeper values continue to be maintained.

In approaching these connections of place and religion, I look at three scales of geographic study: specific sites or locations, national territories, and the broader region of Eastern Europe and its place on the conceptual map of Europe. I draw from the preceding essays in the volume and other papers presented at the project's two meetings, as well as the work of other scholars and my own research. By no means, however, can this essay be considered a conclusion to our collaborative project. Instead, I speak for my colleagues in expressing the hope that this volume will open new lines of research into East European Christianity. Toward that aim, this essay suggests directions that might be taken, and questions that can be asked, if historians of Eastern Europe and European religion give attention to place as a factor in religious belief and practice.

Sacred Sites

The shrines of Częstochowa and Medjugorje, Zhirovitsy and Mária-pócs. Bukovina's painted churches and the wooden churches of eastern Slovakia. The monasteries of Ohrid, Ostrog, and Rila. Lithuania's Hill of Crosses and Hungary's Esztergom Basilica. The monastic caves of Kyiv and Tipova. Even a short list of the sacred Christian sites of Eastern Europe includes some of the most treasured places in the region—points that draw pilgrims and tourists from neighboring towns and from around the world.⁸ Whether an officially religious, built environment, such as a chapel or monastery, or a place associated with the life of a saint or historical event, sacred places are recognized as having extraordinary significance, as being set apart. These are places where meaning is focused, where the religious imagination glimpses the mythic past or the mysterious eternal and clarifies the human and superhuman, us and them, the central and the peripheral, the remembered past and the expected future.⁹

In the language of theologians, holy sites are sacramental places: they are specific points of communication between God and people. In his acclaimed study of American sacred places, historian Belden Lane adopts this language in explaining their hold: "The sacred place becomes the point at which the wondrous power of the divine could be seen breaking into the world's alleged ordinariness."¹⁰ As places where the eternal meets the temporal, sacred sites can speak to the past, present, and future. A memorial site marking a past event or the life of a saint is a tangible, grounded mark of tradition. At the same time as it links a people to the past, a sacred site can also speak to the present, binding a community together, infusing meaning into daily lives, or delivering testimony against godlessness. Lastly, the sacred site also functions as an eschatological sign, as evidence of God's promises.¹¹ These three orientations of a sacred place—memorial of the past, summons to the present, and seal upon the future—are evident in Pope John Paul II's homily during his 1997 visit to the Jasna Góra shrine at Częstochowa:

Many times we used to come here, asking Mary for help... Here we accepted the duties of the Christian life. At the feet of Our Lady of Jasna Góra we found the strength to remain faithful to the

Church, when she was persecuted, when she had to keep silent and suffer... I have said many times that Jasna Góra is the shrine of the Nation, the confessional and the altar. It is the place where Poles find spiritual transformation and renewal of life. May it remain so for ever.¹²

The meanings or messages of sacred sites are produced and transmitted in homilies, in devotional and secular literature, in musical or artistic representations, as well as in the rituals and festivals at the site.¹³ These poetics of sacred place typically express the belief that something awe-inspiring or mysterious manifested itself at the site, thus making it a point of connection between the divine and the earthly. One problem, however, particularly in Eastern Europe, is that the poetics of sacred places often convey both universal and local meanings.¹⁴ These simultaneous impulses—one tribal, the other transcendent—are evident in the poetics of Częstochowa. The shrine at Jasna Góra is, in the words of John Paul, the “altar of the Nation,” yet it also draws, each year, millions of pilgrims and tourists from dozens of countries. For some believers, Poles and non-Poles, the local and the universal converge at Jasna Góra; the icon’s interventions in Polish history are signs of its miraculous power for all Catholics. Proclaiming this, John Paul closed his 1997 homily at the shrine by offering “all the prayers of my fellow countrymen and all the needs and intentions of the universal Church and of all people throughout the world.”¹⁵ But inclusive poetics do not always offset the exclusive. Despite pretensions to universality, the expressions of a site’s meaning, even those of a Catholic pontiff, often define a place, if not as the property of a single group, then as a sacramental site where the divine is revealed in a unique way to that one group. In the case of Częstochowa, the narrative of Polish national history is inseparable from the poetics of the shrine. As John Paul stated in 1997, quoting the homily of his first papal visit to Jasna Góra, the shrine is a fixed point of connection between the Polish nation and the divine, and even an oracular site, giving sense to the nation’s history. “If we want to know how... history is interpreted by the heart of the Poles,” he stated, “we must come here, we must attune our ear to this shrine.”¹⁶

Historians and social scientists stress that the meanings of sacred sites are plural, and that local and universal orientations are just one

possible set of these overlapping and potentially competing meanings. The history of Eastern Europe shows how fierce can be the conflicts over not only possession of sites but also mastery of their meanings. In this region, where sacred sites have been expropriated and refitted, where statues of saints and simple gravestones have been toppled, and where bulldozers and bombs have leveled chapels, synagogues, and mosques, organized violence has been used not only to control populations or resources but also to control or erase a group's connecting point to the divine. Perhaps the most salient—and certainly still incendiary—example of how deeply interwoven are the poetic meanings and political contests of sacred places is Kosovo. As with other sites, the sacralization of Kosovo had its origins and subsequent turns in meaning in specific historical contexts, during which its communicative functions were actively shaped and transmitted, molded by political and cultural changes, and directed against the narratives of other groups.¹⁷ In the centuries following the battle of 1389, pilgrims visited the monastery at Gračanica to pay reverence to the martyred Prince Lazar. But in the nineteenth century, as a Serbian national culture emerged and the Serbian state expanded its territory, attention shifted to the battle site at nearby Kosovo Polje, which was seen as a symbol of medieval Serbia's sacrificial defeat and an object of longing.¹⁸ In the early and mid-twentieth century, advocates of a Yugoslav state redefined Kosovo as a site that symbolized the unity of all South Slavs in their struggle for freedom.¹⁹ But by 1989, nationalists had claimed the site (and surrounding region) exclusively for Serbs, using it as an important symbol in political struggles against Albanians and the federal Yugoslav state.

The contemporary conflicts over Kosovo give evidence of four political cords tied into the sacralization of place in the modern period, as described by philosopher Gerardus van der Leeuw. First, the marking of a sacred place is a conquest of space, the setting apart of an extraordinary place from ordinary space; second, sacred sites are appropriated as the property of a particular group; third, like the walls of a home, sacred places have exclusionary boundaries that keep people out; and fourth, sacred places, unlike other sites on the landscape, offer haven to moderns who have lost their connection to a larger sense of the mysterious.²⁰ David Chidester and Edward Linenthal, following from van der Leeuw, propose two additional political strategies in the marking of sacred places: inversion and hybridization. A strategy of inversion over-

turns the prevailing spatial order, so that the marginal becomes central or the powerful are humbled; a strategy of hybridization, meanwhile, involves a mixing, transgressing, even mocking of standard spatial relations.²¹ These strategies are seen in Serbs' persistent claims to Kosovo. Despite an overwhelming Albanian majority in Kosovo province, a decade-long NATO protectorate over the region, and American and European Union support for the Kosovar Albanians' declaration of independence in 2008, Serbs continued to insist that "Kosovo is Serbia." Moreover, Serbian political and religious leaders maintain universal pretensions of the site's importance, stressing that the struggle over this tiny, impoverished province is an issue vital to Europe as a whole. The poetics of Kosovo hold that, at this far corner of the continent, Serbia stood in defense of Europe in 1389. In the 1980s, Serb nationalists offered a variation on this motif, claiming that their struggle, this time against the "pre-modern" Albanians, was on behalf of the other Yugoslav peoples, European civilization, and all of humanity.²² Metropolitan Amfilohije (Radović) of Montenegro reaffirmed the centrality of the site for all Europe again in 2008, following the Kosovar declaration of independence: "Right here [at Kosovo] we defend not only our own honor, but also the dignity of a degraded Europe."²³ To the thousands of Serbs who listened to Amfilohije at an outdoor prayer service in Belgrade, the label "ancestral heartland" that Western journalists typically apply to the province was insufficient to explain its hold. As the hierarch declared, Kosovo is a sacred place to Serbs: "Kosovo is the apple of our eye, our holy city of Jerusalem, and we in this country cannot give up on it, neither in this life nor in the next."²⁴

The well-known contests over Kosovo seem to confirm the conventional view that nationalism has been the vital ingredient in the political impulses that shape sacred sites in modern Eastern Europe. But nationalist strategies do not always drive the production or defense of sacred places. Scholars of sacred sites in other world regions remind us that the contests surrounding shrines and holy places have various forms: sectarian, gender, class, ideological.²⁵ The divisions at sacred sites might be between distinct religious and national groups, as is the case with Kosovo, or they might be within a national and religious group. The shrine of Medjugorje, for instance, has been an object of rivalry between two branches of the Roman Catholic Church in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Franciscan order and the diocese of Mostar.²⁶

As Geneviève Zubrzycki's recent work shows, the makeshift cluster of crosses planted near the Auschwitz concentration camp in the late 1990s served to draw lines of exclusion both *among* Polish Catholics and *between* Polish Catholics and other groups.²⁷ In 1998–1999 grass-roots groups of Catholics planted hundreds of wooden crosses just outside the camp walls, around an eight-meter-high cross that had been used during the 1979 papal mass. Poetically, the simple crosses commemorated the first pilgrimage of John Paul II and the deaths of Polish Catholics at the hands of the Germans. But, in setting the crosses into the soil at Auschwitz, Catholic laypeople and clergy declared an exclusive vision of Poland's past and future. The crosses staked the former work camp as a site of Polish as well as Jewish suffering. In addition, the activists also targeted other Catholic Poles as enemies. Seeing themselves as true Poles and true Catholics, the cross-planters counted as traitors the Church hierarchy and liberal Catholics along with any Pole willing to cooperate with Jews, German property-buyers, or European institutions. In their defense of Polish Catholic identity, the activists practiced the strategies of inversion and hybridization described by Chidester and Linenthal. The crosses at Auschwitz were intended to confront—and to shame—Church leaders and secular cultural figures with their own rejection of the true faith. Furthermore, the wooden crosses in the gravel pit outside the camp, rather than the artifacts of terror inside the walls, became the true markers of sacred space.

In this volume, Anca Şincan's essay likewise shows the confluence of nationalist and religious aims in the building of village churches in Ceauşescu's Romania. Communist authorities made decisions on new constructions and even the siting of church buildings according to a nationalist calculus, seeking to privilege Orthodox Romanians over Hungarians and Germans. At the same time, the Romanian Orthodox hierarchy saw church-building in rural Transylvania as part of the decades-long integration of Greek Catholic Romanians. Şincan suggests, however, that the interests of local parishioners were somewhat removed from these national political and religious strategies. Yes, the villagers of Cerghizel recognized the shifting national balance in the state administration and brought their requests to ethnic Romanian officials. But their project was not aimed at advancing this shift in Transylvanian politics; to them, the new church building was to be a more suitable place of worship. My own research on church-build-

ing in interwar Prague affirms that this basic motivation—a local faith community's need for a more functional place to gather—cannot be lost amidst the larger political struggles. During the planning and construction of the Church of the Sacred Heart in Prague's Vinohrady district, the parish faced opposition from anti-clerical groups and municipal officials. In appeals to parishioners and other potential donors, parish leaders did address these objections, arguing that the Czech Catholic Church was engaged in a struggle with enemies, but their principal argument for the project was consistent: the Catholic community of Vinohrady needed a new place of worship.²⁸

Yet even when local believers saw their efforts as motivated simply by the need for a usable place of worship, contentious issues were inescapable. In the case of Prague's Church of the Sacred Heart, the modernist design of architect Jože Plečnik met with strong opposition, especially among Czech Catholics. Such conflicts over the aesthetic appearance of sacred sites were not uncommon, nor were they insignificant. The visual poetics of a sacred place—its architecture, the disposition of altar and chapels, the icons, stained glass and statuary decorating its interior and exterior—can be catalysts for nationalist, class, theological, or artistic dispute. In the 1990s, the Bulgarian Orthodox hierarchy refused to consecrate the Church of St. Petka Bulgarka in Rupite, the chapel built near the home of the prophetess Vanga, owing to the unconventional designs of architect Bogdan Tomalevski and artist Svetlin Rusev.²⁹ In the years before and after World War I, church designs inspired by Viennese *Jugendstil* and international modernism were realized in the Czech Lands, Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia; meanwhile, modern projects for churches in Poland, Bosnia, and Serbia were rejected in favor of historicist plans.³⁰ One example of a monumental church project mired in controversy over design was Belgrade's Cathedral of St. Sava. The original call for proposals in the mid-1920s restricted the style of the new church to medieval Serbian and early Byzantine architecture (the notice also invited proposals only from Serbs—and perhaps exiled Russians). The narrow requirements met with strong criticism from Serbian artists and intellectuals, and the competition produced no satisfactory design. But the public, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the king wanted the project to go forward, so the commission went to the two second-place finishers, who combined and amplified their plans.³¹ The structure was far from

complete when war interrupted in 1941, and the project resumed only in 1985. This time, the divisive issues of the interwar period—the aptness of Byzantine architectural forms, the nationalist motives of the project, and its huge cost—were put aside, as the emerging Serbian nationalist movement clamored for completion of one of the largest Orthodox monuments in the world.³²

The building of St. Sava, like the construction of Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia and the Arka Pana Church in Nowa Huta, shows that sacred places are sites of deliberate creation, wrapped in dramas of artistic rivalry, national and ideological politics, sectarian division, and class interests. And, as we see in Sinčan's study of tiny Cerghizel, these dramas were not restricted to major building projects in large cities. If we think of the local parish church as a sacred site, with its own founding myth, dynamic historical figures, and narratives of decline and revival, then the points on a map of Eastern Europe's sacred places are many and varied. Add to these the sacred sites of Jews and Muslims, and the religious landscape becomes even more crowded—and the opportunities for investigation limitless. Sacred sites, whether a village parish, the tomb of a Hasidic rabbi, or a dervish monastery, are stages on which the region's history has been concentrated, with multiple groups' religious beliefs, nationalist prejudices, and economic interests overlapping, colliding, and sometimes even co-existing.³³ But, in looking at the production, maintenance, and transformation of sacred places, we must remember the caution of Brian Porter-Szűcs's introduction: the meanings of these sites cannot be reduced to expressions of social cohesion or political maneuvering. Yes, the poetics of sacred sites are interwoven with situational power struggles, but these expressions of meaning are not limited to political ambitions. Belden Lane advises that study of sacred places "demands our applying all the categories of scientific investigation."³⁴ In particular, Lane warns, scholars must be attentive to the words of poets, if they are to understand the interplays and the attractions at those sites. The poet reminds us, he writes, "that sacred places are, first of all, 'storied' places—elaborately woven together on a cultural loom that joins every detail of the landscape within a given community of memory. If we omit the storied experience of the place (the shared subjectivity of its human and more-than-human participants), we lose the power it exercises on the imagination."³⁵

Holy Lands

As in most towns and villages in Slovenia's Primorska region, Avber, Prem, and Lokev are watched over by centuries-old churches. Their grey stone walls and simple architecture are unremarkable, but inside, the churches are striking. In these village churches and some dozen others along the Slovene-Italian border, artist Tone Kralj, one of the leading interwar Yugoslav modernists, painted murals of scenes from the gospels and lives of the saints. With their vivid colors and modern style, set within small rural churches, the murals are a remarkable artistic work. But the murals are more than works of decorative sacral art; together they transform the churches into a chain. At the time Kralj painted the murals, between 1922 and 1944, these villages were on the Italian side of the border set by the Treaty of Rapallo. Kralj thus created images that offered encouragement to the Slovene parishioners living under Fascist rule: Jesus' followers are the local peasants, elements of the local landscape are visible in the backgrounds, and passages from scripture are written in Slovene. In his paintings of the late 1930s and early 1940s, Kralj was more direct: Christ's mockers wear Fascist helmets and Nazi brownshirts, and in one mural the unmistakable profile of Mussolini appears among the Roman soldiers. To Slovenian Catholics, Kralj's church paintings were a visual reminder that they were in a struggle of Good and Evil, and that God was on their side. And although the individual churches were small points on the map, Kralj's patrons in the Church understood the decorated sanctuaries as a series of connected points running through the vineyards and karst hills.³⁶ Like a circuit, this string of church buildings extended the sacredness of specific sites to the broader landscape. The political lines on the map did not alter the cultural and religious landscape. The land remained Slovene.

As geographers of nationalism explain, identification with place has been vital to the formation of national communities. In a process they describe as social spatialization or the "nesting" of a nation's identity, a group defines itself in relation to the topography, climate, and natural resources of the space it inhabits.³⁷ Poets sing of the land, the mountains and meadows; artists and composers try to capture the beauty of its rivers and forests. The natural features evoke shared

memories; they come to be seen as a source of comfort and bounty for the community.³⁸ In this process, the space becomes a bounded, meaningful place: a homeland possessed by the people and part of them. In Eastern Europe, as in other world regions, most national groups have drawn upon religious imagery, language, and traditions in this binding of nation to homeland. The national territory is understood as a gift from above, its natural beauty and fruitfulness a blessing of God, with God's past intervention bringing it into the nation's possession. These themes are repeated still today in the anthems of some East European nations. With lyrics typically taken from nineteenth-century poets, these anthems offer thanks to God for the homeland or call for protection of the territory. The Hungarian national hymn, for example, concludes with words of praise:

You [Lord] brought our ancestors up
Over the Carpathians' holy peaks,
By You was won a beautiful homeland....
For us on the plains of the Kuns
You ripened the wheat,
In the grape fields of Tokaj
You dripped sweet nectar.³⁹

There is an important theological shift in this sacralizing of an expanse of territory as opposed to a singular site. Whereas a site is understood as sacred because of its association with a particular person or event, the sacralization of territory blankets the soil, the streams, the forests and hills in a patina of holiness. But as the lyrics above indicate, the hills and fields are not holy in and of themselves; instead, the land becomes holy through its relationship to the people who settle and possess it, as this relationship is sealed by God.⁴⁰ Furthermore, in viewing the land as a gift from God, the people understand themselves as having special favor, as being chosen. Thus, a homeland seen as holy is tangible evidence of God's solicitude for an elected people. Even though election does not necessarily confer an exclusive or superior status, myths of chosenness often inspire both, making the nation's claim to its received land all the more tenacious.⁴¹ As discussed above, groups also insist upon the privileged possession of sacred sites, but these claims are typically contested by other groups or undermined

by expressions of meaning that declare the sites' universal significance. The myths of holy lands, in contrast, are based in the unique, relational union of God, people, and homeland. Thus, a chosen nation's assertions of its holy land do not allow for the claims of others.

In the linking of nation, land, and God, groups typically draw upon the narrative of the world's "first nation," the ancient Hebrews. The scriptural accounts of the Hebrews' settlement in Canaan provided the conceptual language for modern national movements, notably the ideas of a "chosen people" and land granted by God.⁴² Moreover, if the land is understood as a gift from above, then the actions involved in claiming take on a sacral mien. Historian Hedva Ben-Israel explains that, like a medieval king's peregrinations through his realm, a group's claim of territory as the birthright of the nation amounts to a hallowing of the land. "Claiming the land on behalf of the nation imbued it with a transcendent authority over past, present and future," Ben-Israel writes. "With that claim, the first step was taken toward the sanctification of national land."⁴³ In surveying different national groups' sanctification of territory, Ben-Israel directs a corrective toward much of the literature on nationalism and nation-building: the importance of the land cannot be neglected. Religious language or appropriations from church history not only gave authority to the nation as a political entity or contributed to a shared identity; they also sealed the nation's ownership of the territory. Ben-Israel states: "The sanctification of land, nation, frontiers, heroes and forefathers was the outstanding strategy by which nationalists of all kinds, literary, philosophical or military, consciously or unconsciously imagined, narrated, and activated their nations."⁴⁴ Geographer Anssi Paasi would agree, pointing to the ways in which groups establish claim over territory as vitally important to the nation-building process. In his study of Finnish nation-building, Paasi emphasizes that, when territory is sacralized, the nation's efforts at marking the territory have great meaning. Paasi argues that, in many contexts, nationalists typically "define the state, nation or boundary itself as a holy entity and the aggressive activities of the state as holy in themselves."⁴⁵

Yet Paasi's interpretation requires a counterpoint. Giving primacy to nationalist motivations, Paasi states that a nation-state "exploits religious discourse politically."⁴⁶ This view of religion as an instrument of nationalist politics is conventional in studies of Eastern Europe.

Indeed, research on Christianity and nationalism in the region has provided a thorough picture of how Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians identified their interests with those of the nation, how nationalist elites employed things sacred for political aims, and how confessional identities came to be synonymous with—and ultimately subsumed within—national identities. However, in recent and older literature, study of Christianity has been lost in attention to the nation. An explicit aim of this project has been to de-center the nation from our investigations of Christianity in Eastern Europe. The studies in this volume present nation and religion, or rather the practice and perception of nationhood and Christianity, in an overlapping, horizontal relationship, rather than a causal, vertical one, in which religious identities and communities evolve into national identities and communities. Participants in the project have recognized these two types of group formation, these two means of comprehending the world and grounding identity, as sometimes competing, sometimes mutually reinforcing.

In the present volume, Natalia Shlikhta's essay offers an example of this horizontal connection of national and religious identities, along with a deep sense of attachment to place. The label that Shlikhta uses to describe her subjects, "West Ukrainian Greek Catholics," cannot be easily abridged; each part of the term has vital meaning. The group identified itself with a place—Western Ukraine—set apart from the Ukrainian lands that had been part of the Soviet and tsarist empires. Of course, the ethno-linguistic label is vital. Shlikhta's subjects clearly regarded themselves as Ukrainian, a people distinct from Russians and Poles, and they understood the church reunification as a program of russification, a threat to the ethno-linguistic group. Third, but no less important, was the confessional identity: Greek Catholic. Shlikhta's discussion of West Ukrainians' responses to reunification shows that fundamental to the definition of "us" was the religious divide between Greek Catholic and Orthodox. As local Soviet officials understood, this divide was more than a matter of ecclesiastical authority; the rituals of worship, the priestly vestments, and the prayers of the faithful all contributed to the shared identity of West Ukrainian Greek Catholics. What was the primary attachment of this group? Church? Nation? Homeland? Shlikhta's essay shows that each of these three defining features had weight in this community's self-identification and in the resilience of that identity through the decades of Soviet rule.

A de-centering of the nation does not suggest, however, that we should negate or even diminish the nation. Indeed, there were episodes when the two faiths, national and Christian, so complemented each other as to become seamless.⁴⁷ In this volume, Paul Hanebrink's essay offers a clear and troubling example of Christian institutions and rhetoric integrated with nationalist politics. Hungarian "Christian nationalism" of the interwar period effectively melded Catholic and Protestant language with nationalist interests into an exclusivist, antisemitic ideology. But in looking at this connection of nation and religion, the bonds between nation and homeland must also be emphasized. The prime chord of Hungarian political culture of the interwar period was the unjust dismantling of the kingdom's territory in the Treaty of Trianon, and this chord sounded in harmony with the Christian nationalism of the time. References to the Lands of St. Stephen as "sacred" and "holy" were common in anti-Trianon rhetoric. And just as Poles of the nineteenth century described their kingdom as "dismembered," so did Hungarians of the 1920s and 1930s see the historic Crown Lands as a body torn apart.⁴⁸ In the rhetoric of the interwar period, the language and imagery of martyrdom, even crucifixion, was used in describing the assault upon the historic Hungarian lands. For example, one postcard of an anti-Trianon campaign showed the outline of the prewar kingdom superimposed over an image of Christ on the cross. Another depicted the kingdom itself, having the physical form of its prewar boundaries, on a cross.⁴⁹ For Hungarian nationalists, the prewar boundaries were more than a "geo-body," the territorial definition of the nation.⁵⁰ Their union of religion, people, and land drew upon Christian theological language: just as Christ is believed to be God in bodily form, so too was the territory of former kingdom represented as the *incarnation* of the Hungarian nation.

In the poetics of incarnation in interwar Hungary, themes of violence and martyrdom played alongside those of contagion and cleansing. The nation, as a people, had been weakened from within, leaving the body, the homeland, vulnerable to dismemberment. Resurrection of the homeland thus required cleansing of that contagion. But as the spiritual and moral struggle of the 1920s gave way to a contest of races, so did the definition of the sacred body change. According to racial nationalists, moral campaigns—even the cleansing of the immoral Jew through baptism—could not protect the nation. Jews could become

Christians, but they could not become Hungarians. Racist nationalism along with the notion of the homeland as a holy land necessitated the elimination of the profane. In pursuing increasingly exclusionary policies against the Jews, Hungarian nationalists followed ideas of a holy land and a chosen nation to their logical end. If a land and people are bound together by God, there can be no intermingling with unclean outsiders. If the homeland is holy, there is no room for the profane.⁵¹

Both Hanebrink's and Shlikhta's essays demonstrate that holy lands are not simply products of rhetoric; they are also places of activity. The West Ukrainian Greek Catholics who sought to live as a distinct community within the Orthodox Church and the Hungarian seminary students who helped resettle Magyar families in ethnically mixed borderlands acted to create places where religious and national identities would be secure. These practices can be understood, like Tone Kralj's murals, as elements of the cultural landscape. As recent scholarship in geography stresses, the cultural landscape of a place must be understood not simply as the built environment or representations and imaginings of the natural landscape. The cultural landscape is also molded by practices within a place; it is a scene of ideas, impressions, and activity. In turn, these landscape-shaping activities are also influenced by people's understanding of the place they inhabit. Geographer Tim Cresswell notes that the phrases "in place" and "out of place" indicate the connection between spatial awareness and mores of accepted or expected behavior.⁵² Applying this observation to religious practice, we would find a young man attending morning mass to be "in place" in Kraków, while a young man attending church in Prague would be seen as "out of place." And not only is our perspective of the young man in Prague colored by an awareness of place, but so too is his understanding of his own religious practice and identity, as would be the case for a young woman who regularly attends church in, say, Berkeley as opposed to a churchgoer in Colorado Springs. Cresswell argues elsewhere that notions of what is "in place" and "out of place" can be understood as part of the "doxic landscape" or landscape of practice in a particular place. Drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Cresswell argues that the *doxa*—those ideas that a group accepts as given, that which "goes without saying"—is not only defined by a particular social group but is also grounded in place. A doxic landscape, writes Cresswell, "that is the product of a particular history is made to

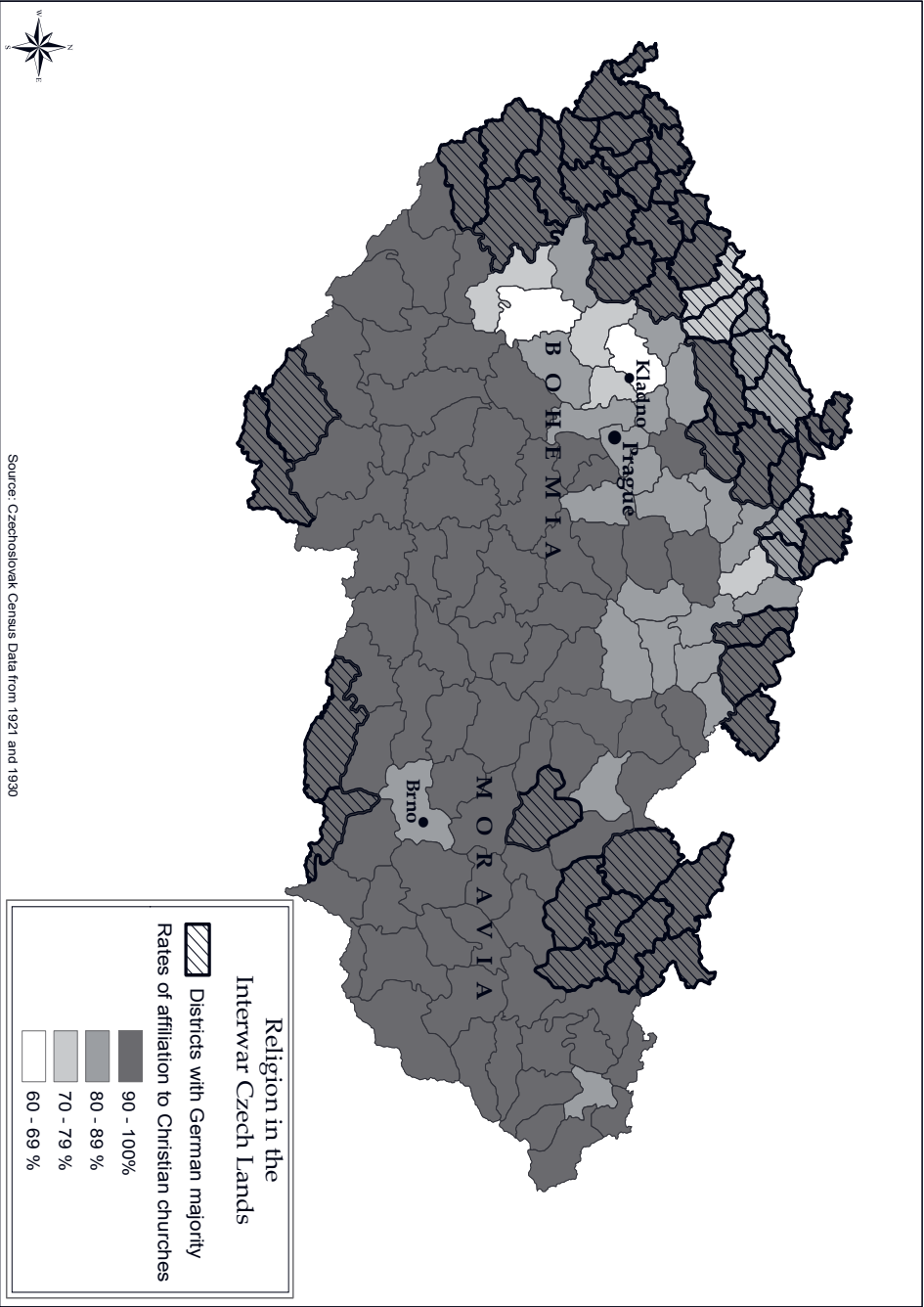
seem natural and thus becomes an important site for the reproduction of established ways of being. Such a landscape is very much the product and producer of practice.”⁵³

For the historian the question arises: how does a “particular history” produce an environment that shapes practices? And, beyond that, how and why does the doxic landscape in a place change over time? In approaching these questions, two national territories in Eastern Europe offer useful case studies: Poland and the Czech Republic. Maps of religious adherence in contemporary Europe typically color Poland solidly Catholic, while the Czech Republic is an opposite hue, representing the absence of religiosity. This religious geography, which suggests a homogenous religiosity throughout the territory of a nation-state, is commonly accepted for Eastern Europe, yet it is problematic. James Bjork’s ongoing research on postwar Polish religion, including his essay in this volume, disputes the conventional notion of a monolithically Catholic Poland. Rather than being the source of cohesion amidst a changing tangle of political boundaries, mixings of ethno-linguistic and religious groups, and mass shifts of population, twentieth-century Polish Catholicism had wide regional variations in belief and practice. Data on religious participation show that a principal yet unexplained determinant in these regional differences is the legacy of the partitions. Even today the peculiar geography of Polish Catholicism follows the nineteenth-century partition boundaries: dioceses once part of Austrian-ruled Galicia and Silesia still have the highest levels of church attendance, followed by dioceses once part of Prussian Poland; in contrast, areas that were part of the Russian Empire consistently register the lowest levels of participation. Exceptions to this pattern include the northern archdioceses of Szczeciń and Olsztyn, which had been largely German in population before 1945 and thus were resettled with Poles from the East after the war.⁵⁴

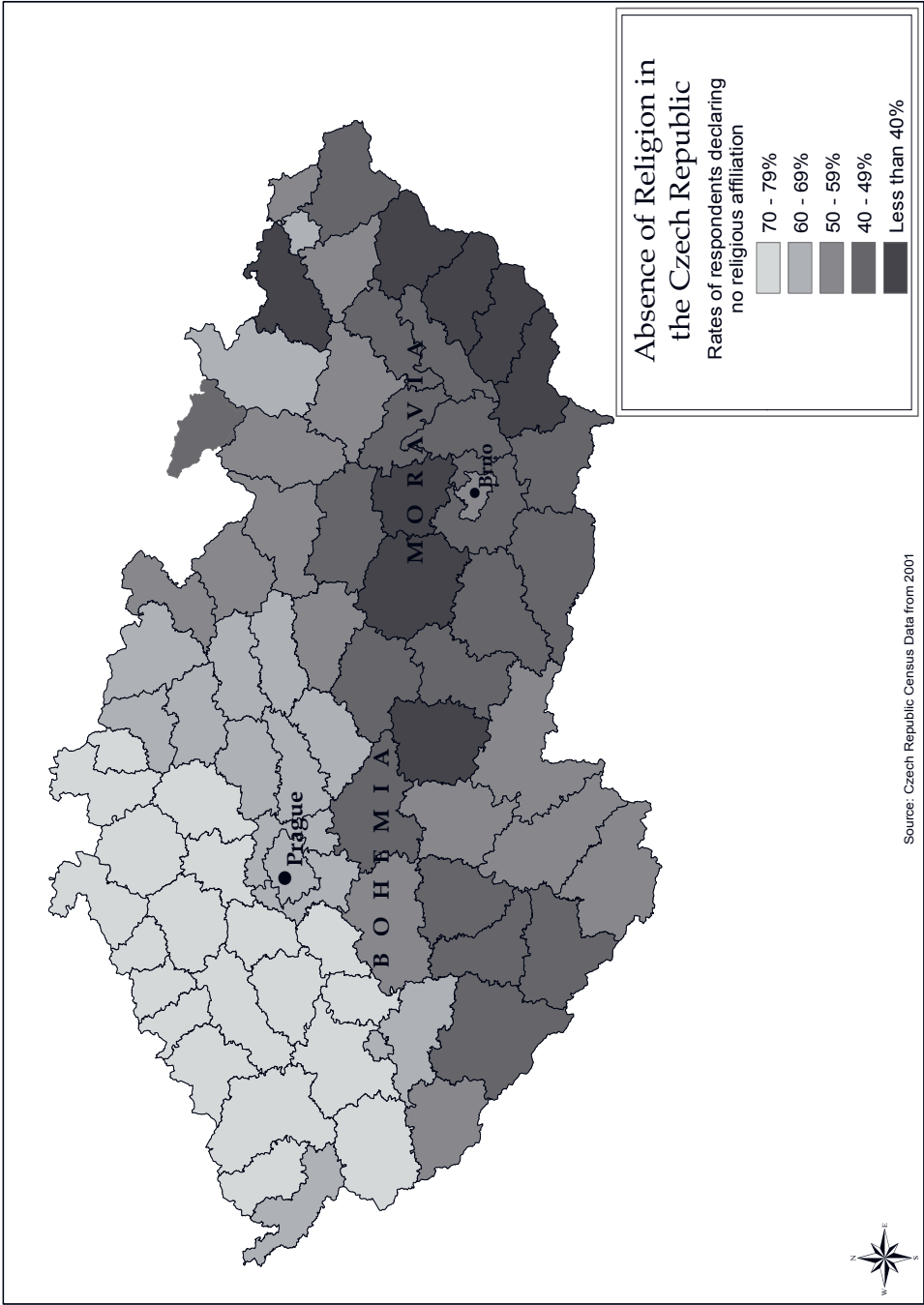
As in Catholic Poland, a closer view of the Czech Republic offers a counter to the conventional view of that nation as overwhelmingly irreligious. The individualized spirituality observed in Western Europe is evident throughout contemporary Czech society, countering the notion of the Czechs as an atheistic nation.⁵⁵ And although there are strong anti-clerical tendencies in Czech culture, rates of church affiliation do vary across the country. The generally acknowledged difference between secular Bohemia and more-religious Moravia is appa-

rent, but there are also notable curiosities. Southeastern and southwestern Bohemia still have significant Catholic minorities. And the core of Czech atheism is not cosmopolitan Prague but provincial northern Bohemia. This region, like central Poland, had been an area of industrial development in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and already in the interwar period districts such as Kladno showed the lowest rates of church membership in Czechoslovakia (as did Ostrava in northeast Moravia).⁵⁶ But this larger region, similar to the Polish archdioceses of Olsztyn and Szczeciń, also included districts that had been largely populated by Germans before the war. Germans of this region adhered largely to the Catholic Church, and their expulsion severely weakened the Church as an institution. In the Litoměřice diocese alone, 335 German priests were removed from service between 1945 and 1948. In the city of Most, the number of serving priests dropped from twenty-two in 1938 to five in 1948; in Děčín, from twenty-one to two. There was similar drop in the number of served parishes in formerly German areas of the Prague archdiocese.⁵⁷ Thus, by the time of the communist takeover in Czechoslovakia, the expulsion of the German population had emptied the pews—and the altars—of Catholic churches in western and northern Bohemia.

Bjork argues that Poland in the 1960s and 1970s was not as exceptional as is customarily believed, in light of the regional variation in religious practice as well as the low rates of participation across the country as a whole. Likewise, evidence of active religious commitment among a good part of the Czech population in the interwar period and even through the 1940s counters the conventional picture of the Czechs as thoroughly secularized by the mid-twentieth century. Eight new Catholic churches were built in interwar Prague, each requiring significant campaigns of volunteers and donors.⁵⁸ And when the churches were built, there were people in the pews. According to the 1999 European Values Survey, large percentages of older Czech respondents recalled consistent church attendance as children.⁵⁹ The standard coloring of both Catholic Poland and the secular Czech Republic on the contemporary religious map of Europe therefore can be seen as reflective of more recent developments. In the Czech Lands, the postwar movements of populations, along with concerted government oppression of some clergy and successful cooption of others, were factors in the marked downturn in religious practice. The sharp



Map 4.



Map 5.

decline in religious participation among Czechs came in the 1950s and 1960s, with the low point coming in the 1970s, the period of normalization. In Poland, meanwhile, church attendance followed trajectories similar to those of West European countries in the 1960s and 1970s. Faced with the challenges of young people drifting from the faith, disorientation caused by population transfers, and state aggression against the Church, Polish clergy and hierarchs launched a deliberate campaign, highlighted by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's Great Novena, aimed at shoring the hold of Catholicism on Poles. As Bjork argues, the Great Novena was an attempt to forge a Catholic Poland, rather than a celebration of some deep-rooted national character.

Just as Polish-Catholic identity was an invention, so was the practice of Polish Catholicism. The Great Novena was one part of an effort to reaffirm the Catholic identity of Poles as well as forge a consistent pattern of practice. Lay intellectuals, priests, and bishops promoted a "Polish Catholicism" that could serve to integrate the unsettled post-war population into a cohesive whole, with the more intensive practice of the faith common in former Austrian and Prussian Poland becoming the norm for Polish Catholics everywhere.⁶⁰ This effort at building Polish Catholicism continued under Wyszyński's onetime subordinate and later superior. A cultural geography of the Poland of John Paul II corresponds to the regional variations that clergy and sociologists recognized in the 1950s and 1960s and the Church sought to remedy. In nine pilgrimages to his homeland, John Paul traveled throughout the country, as well as to formerly Polish cities of Vilnius and L'viv. Yet the pope spent much of his time in Poland in his home region. Moreover, the making of saints during John Paul's papacy shows a similar concentration on this southern region. With the exception of Maximilian Kolbe, whose life touched all corners of Poland, eight of the nine Polish saints canonized by John Paul are strongly associated with Silesia and Galicia, as either the locations of their ministries or the sites of their shrines.⁶¹ It should not be surprising that figures such as Maria Fastina Kowalska or Adam Chmielowski achieved sainthood during the papacy of the former archbishop of Kraków, who was most familiar with their lives and devotions. But we can also ask what part the making of Polish saints, nearly all of whom represented the region of ultramontanist Catholic practice, played in making a uniform Polish Catholicism.

The case studies of Catholic Poland and Polish Catholicism, as well as the secular Czech Republic and Czech secularism, indicate that the actions of police agencies, government ministries, and prelates certainly influenced changes in the doxic landscape in specific contexts. Yet while acknowledging the deliberate formation and more recent emergence of patterns of religious life, we must also question the deeper roots of landscapes of practice. Visits to churches in Prague and Kraków bring into stark contrast the differences in religious life in those places, and even a cursory reading of the scholarly literature and primary sources shows that these differences were evident in the past. Politicians, writers, teachers, and priests, from the nineteenth century onward, frequently wrote of their nations' religious affiliations. Both Roman Dmowski and Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk claimed that the characters of their respective nations included an essential religious dimension: the equation of *polak* and *katolik* was a central theme of Dmowski's political rhetoric, while Masaryk argued that Protestantism was at the core of Czech identity and the Roman Catholic Church was an alien institution. Their statements, however, did not necessarily give an accurate picture of religious life at the time. The religious map of early twentieth-century Poland was a patchwork of confessions and regional practices, whereas in the Czech Lands, where an overwhelming majority of Czechs were baptized into the Church, Catholic organizations retained a significant place in society. Dmowski and Masaryk expressed their observations of contemporary attitudes and practices, but these observations were subjectively filtered. Rather than accurate analyses of Czech and Polish society at the turn of the century, their statements and those of their supporters can be read as wishful thinking—or the seeds of self-fulfilling prophecies.

José Casanova has written of European secularization as self-fulfilling prophecy, arguing that religious decline occurred as more and more people accepted the premise that secularity is a necessary part of modern society. "If such a proposition is correct," writes Casanova, "then the secularization of Western European societies can be explained better in terms of the triumph of the knowledge regime of secularism, than in terms of structural processes of socio-economic development such as urbanization, education, rationalization, etc."⁶² In seeking an answer to the quandary of European secularization, Casanova turns attention to matters of identity, to the ways in which ordinary Europe-

ans, drawing upon a “knowledge regime,” came to think of themselves and the larger society. This acceptance of secularity as part of the order of things then shaped individual decisions and practices regarding religiosity. Casanova states:

Theories of secularization in Europe have functioned as self-fulfilling prophesies to the extent to which a majority of the population in Europe came to accept the premises of those theories as a depiction of the normal state of affairs and as a projection of future developments. The premise that the more modern and progressive a society becomes the more religion tends to decline, has assumed in Europe the character of a taken-for-granted belief widely shared not only by sociologists of religion but by a majority of the population. The postulate of progressive religious decline has become part of the European definition of the modern situation with real consequences for church religiosity.⁶³

Although Casanova directs his comments to contemporary Western Europe, there is much here to spark the thinking of the historian of Eastern Europe. First, there is the basic question of how this knowledge regime came to be a *regime*, or a doxic “normal state of affairs.” The “triumph of the knowledge regime of secularism” was not quick or easy. The scholar of Eastern Europe must inquire how ideas and expectations of modernity, including notions of religiosity and secularity, took shape within specific national-political contexts. Moreover, one must ask why, in some cases, secularism was not unquestioningly acknowledged as necessary to modern society and was countered with ideas of the “Christian nation.” In other words: how have understandings of Polish or Czech identity (or Serbian or Slovak or West Ukrainian Greek Catholic) conflicted with or complemented the sense of being a “modern European,” with its assumption of materialism as the default view of the world? Such studies hold promise. Research into the ways national identity or a nation-specific knowledge regime shaped ideas about religious practice can potentially connect the discourse-oriented scholarship of identity with investigations of people’s lived experiences and daily practices. Again, Tim Cresswell’s idea of the doxic landscape or landscape of practice is useful. The doxa, that which is accepted as common sense, and the field of opinion, where orthodox and hetero-

dox views compete, are realms of language, images, and ideas. Here we find Masaryk's and Dmowski's proclamations on religion and nationhood. But the doxic landscape is inhabited, enlivened by people doing things. This is where we find children in their white gowns and tuxedos streaming through Kraków's streets after their first communions and a smattering of old ladies gathered on a cold Sunday morning in a cavernous Prague cathedral. The link between the two—the doxa and the doxic landscape—cannot be assumed to be seamless. Instead, we must view the connection between realms of ideas and landscapes of practice as a historical puzzle to be examined.

Spiritual Cartographies

In considering the connection of doxa and activity, of ideas and attitudes about religion and lived religious practices, there is another important spatial frame to keep in mind. As Izabella Main instructed the participants at the Warsaw conference, "Even during the Cold War, there was something called 'Europe.'" The comment was a pointed reminder: Eastern Europe's past and present is a relational story, a drama of differences perceived and real, of associations and rejections. The relationship to "Europe," meaning the core countries of Western Europe, has been and is today a vital part of the self-perceptions of groups in the region. One can ask how these differing views of Europe have interconnected with attitudes on religiosity. To return to José Casanova's proposition: has secularization become a self-fulfilling prophecy in cases where the reigning self-perception sees the nation as integrally tied to Europe? Conversely, does a national group that distances itself from Europe put greater weight on religiosity as part of its identity? We can ask, for instance, if the recent decline of religious practice in Slovenia is somehow a product of Slovenes' understanding of themselves as the "most successful," and thus "most European," postcommunist nation. Meanwhile, is the revitalization of religious practice in Serbia a result of or influence on that nation's debated stand toward the EU?⁶⁴ The proposition is limited in its applicability (e.g., Western Ukraine has higher rates of religiosity as well as pro-European sentiment than the rest of the country). But considerations of relational geography, the perceptions of a nation's nearness to or distance from Europe, raise questions

about influences on attitudes toward religion, gender roles, and political and economic change. These questions have been left to the purview of social scientists, who pin attitudes about Europe to current politics and economics. The historian must object, with the insistence that East Europeans' attitudes toward the EU today have deeper roots in historical ideas about this "something called 'Europe.'"

There is, of course, a well-established and reputed body of work on perceptions of relational geography, studies that examine the Western view of Eastern Europe as backward and primitive.⁶⁵ Surprisingly, however, in discussing the historical and contemporary images of Eastern Europe as a land of incomprehensible languages, shambolic infrastructure, and irrational violence, these studies have overlooked religion. The oversight is odd, as Western views of East European religiosity and spirituality are a key pigment in coloring the region as backward. Journalists and travelers have marked the religious devotion of the Poles, Slovaks, Romanians, and other peoples of the region as markers of their Otherness.⁶⁶ In his widely read Balkan travelogue, Robert Kaplan recounts a visit with the Orthodox nun, Mother Tatiana, who pauses in their tour of the Gračanica monastery to declare: "I am a good Christian, but I'll not turn the other cheek if some Albanian plucks out the eyes of a fellow Serb."⁶⁷ The scene leaves a potent image of East European (or, as Kaplan intends, specifically Balkan) Christianity: an oath to vengeance sworn before the icons and domes and "black entrails" of an ancient church. This theme of East Europeans' primitive religiosity was also evident in criticisms of John Paul II by West European and North American Catholics. Progressive Western Catholics saw John Paul as "a culture-bound peasant from behind the Iron Curtain," a man out of touch with changes in modern society.⁶⁸ According to one of John Paul's critics, John Cornwell, even the pope's stand against contraception and abortion had its roots in his experiences in Nazi-occupied Poland. Cornwell held that it was crucial to remember that, as a young man, John Paul had "witnessed the tidal wave of hatred that threatened to crush the life out of an entire people." It was no wonder then that the pope, as product of a war-ravaged land, "saw in every indication of thwarted life a type and exemplification of that lust for annihilation he came to call a 'culture of death.'"⁶⁹

But opinions of John Paul II reveal another facet of Western perceptions of East European religion and spirituality. While some in

Western Europe and North America saw his Polishness as the root of an anti-modern conservatism, others saw this same Polishness as the root of his spiritual strength and authority. For instance, Daniel Patrick Moynihan declared his loyalty to the new pope immediately after the papal election of October 1978, stating that John Paul II was the first major figure in the Church to have “grappled with, [and] possibly mastered, the principal philosophical question of our time, which is the question of totalitarianism.”⁷⁰ This respect for the spiritual strength of East Europeans, gained from the struggles of their history, has not been limited to John Paul. Over the last quarter-century, a number of East European cultural and intellectual figures have gained wide audiences and acclaim in the West in part for the perceived spiritual content and moral message of their work. The compositions of Arvo Pärt and Henryk Górecki, with their spare movements and settings of sacred texts, have become favorites among concertgoers and CD-buyers in Britain and North America. Passages of Górecki’s phenomenally popular Third Symphony have been used in theatrical films at moments of tragedy or revelation, and the symphony has accompanied performances and exhibitions inspired by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, the AIDS plague, and the Holocaust.⁷¹ The mournful strings and haunting soprano of Górecki’s composition have become, to Western listeners, a soundtrack for pathos and epiphany. As conductor David Zinman remarked, “It is like listening to the angels.”⁷² Similarly, the films of Krzysztof Kieslowski are acclaimed for their spiritual depth. The *Dekalog* series, in particular, has been ranked among the greatest religious films ever, even though Kieslowski himself disclaimed any religious affiliation.⁷³ Poet Czesław Miłosz and theologian Miroslav Volf have been hailed for a depth of insight gained from their life experiences as East Europeans, even though their years of mature productivity came after their moves to the West. Even writers and thinkers who have disclaimed religious affiliation, such as Václav Havel, Adam Michnik, Leszek Kołakowski, Michael Polanyi, and Slavoj Žižek, have been recognized for their attention to matters spiritual and for their deep respect of Europe’s Christian heritage.⁷⁴ Although the reception of these figures suggests a more respectful view of Eastern Europe, the underlying conceptual geography still colors the region as a land set apart from the West. For West European and North American audiences, life in Eastern Europe, with its history of communism and genocide and

its supposedly deeper religious traditions, has earned these figures a solemnity inaccessible to writers and artists from the democratic, prosperous, and secular West.

Rather than critiquing this conceptual geography as another variation of the negative shading of Eastern Europe, cultural figures have accepted it, positing that the region possesses greater spiritual and cultural resources than the West, owing to its trying history. In the mid-1980s, two of the most renowned intellectuals to emerge from Eastern Europe published essays trumpeting the region's contributions to European history and culture. One of the participants at the Warsaw conference, Vjekoslav Perica, discussed the conflicting geographic visions offered in these two essays: Milan Kundera's "The Tragedy of Central Europe" and John Paul II's encyclical *Slavorum Apostoli* (Apostles to the Slavs).⁷⁵ But setting aside their differing cartographies (and the authors' philosophies), the essays share a fundamental assumption: both the Polish pope and the Czech novelist believed their home region to be the wellspring of Europe, the source of the values and ideas that had made Europe a great civilization. According to Kundera, the Central Europe of the Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, and Austrians was, in the early twentieth century, "a great cultural center, perhaps the greatest."⁷⁶ And John Paul declared that all of Slavic Europe, from the Alps and Adriatic to Russia, was the repository of the heritage of Cyril and Methodius: a legacy of Christian unity, despite the divisions between Catholics and Orthodox.⁷⁷ Both John Paul and Kundera urged, moreover, that a Western Europe mired in base consumption and neglect for higher ideals (whether cultural or religious) would be saved only in rediscovering the contributions of their home region. Kundera claimed that Central Europe's cultural accomplishments and political fate were a warning to Europe as a whole. "All of this century's great Central European works of art, even up to our own day," he stated, "can be understood as long meditations on the possible end of European humanity."⁷⁸ The novelist offered no prescription for how that fate might be averted. John Paul, of course, had no such hesitation. The legacies of Slavic Christianity, he insisted, would "enrich the culture of Europe and its religious tradition" and provide the "foundation for its hoped-for spiritual renewal."⁷⁹ Other cultural figures have echoed this claim of Eastern Europe as a source of moral bearing, or claimed for themselves the authority to dispense lessons to the West, based on their

firsthand experience of the region's tumultuous past. In his acceptance of the 2001 Erasmus Prize in Amsterdam, Adam Michnik spoke of "the wisdom of the people who erred and are marked by original sin." He contrasted these people to a generation that sings of its own freedom but lacks the "memory and consciousness of moral conflict," who live untouched by bounds of good and bad, sin and happiness. Drawing on the words of Erasmus, Michnik compared those without the marks of sin to the Pharisee whose self-assurance earned the anger of Christ. Although not explicit, the association was clear: West Europeans, in their prosperity and security, had lost sight of moral bearings; they had to be challenged by the wisdom of those with original sin. And this wisdom was, in the words of Michnik, "what *we* will bring into Europe."⁸⁰

In claiming a moral authority granted by their experience of the region's history, East European intellectuals repeated themes of their anti-communist writings: the principles of culture over politics, individual ethics over power, and truth over deception. In the post-1989 period, as the former communist states have undergone political and economic transformation and joined (or queued to join) West European institutions, the former dissidents have retained their basic message: an attention to what is called the "spiritual." According to East European intellectuals, the driving forces of European integration are bureaucratic dictates, consumerist motives, and pragmatic liberal policies. As an institution, the EU aims to promote and protect the material wealth of its citizenry, with the idea that greater wealth will bring better health care and education, more money for culture, more free time. Yet, the critics insist, prosperity and liberal rights are not enough. With varying degrees of moralizing, writers from Eastern Europe who publish in Western journals and speak in Western fora make the same charge: the European Union requires a spiritual foundation, yet this is something its leaders have refused to allow.⁸¹

Václav Havel expressed this view consistently in his statements as president on EU expansion. In a 1994 speech to the European Parliament, Havel stated that reading the documents of integration was like "looking into the inner workings of an absolutely perfect and immensely ingenious modern machine," a creation that, while satisfying to the brain, did not address matters of the heart. These matters of the heart, the values of Europe, "with roots in antiquity and in Chris-

tianity,” had been hidden within this machine. The result, he charged, was that many people would come to the view that the EU was “no more than endless arguments over how many carrots can be exported from somewhere, who sets the amount, who checks it and who will eventually punish delinquents who contravene the regulations.” Havel urged that the EU had to be more than that. If it is to last, he concluded, then it must be more than the sum of its regulations. The EU had to embody “a particular relationship to the world, to human life and ultimately to the world order. Far more clearly than before, it must impress upon millions of European souls an idea, a historical mission and a momentum.”⁸² In this emphasis on the spiritual over the technocratic, on values and mission over market forces, the appeal of the Czech intellectual-turned-president echoed the message of Slovak bishops to their flock, to the “European souls” under their care: “Market and economic liberties alone cannot keep unity. Europe needs the soul from which spiritual unity could grow and bear fruit. This will be the guarantee of its economic and political unity. Europe needs to draw strength from its spiritual roots. Only a tree with strong and deep roots will bear fruit, the wind will not break it and the sun will not burn it.”⁸³

Certainly, there are fundamental differences in the moral visions of Václav Havel and the Catholic bishops of Slovakia. But, as with Milan Kundera and John Paul II, there is a common outline to their spiritual cartographies: Eastern Europe is the place where truth and principle are defended. The idea is not new. Medieval kings and princes, both Catholic and Orthodox, saw themselves as standing alone in defense of Christendom against the false religions of pagans and Muslims.⁸⁴ Their declarations, like the addresses of contemporary intellectuals, indicate more than an identification with Europe, or a longing for the appreciation of those at the center. There is also a turning of the standard spatial ordering in Europe. For Christian princes of the past, as for intellectuals of today, the margins are essential. The fortunes of Europe, its wealth and power, its identity and existence, depend upon those at its frontiers.

This inversion of the customary spatial order has become even more pronounced in the current environment of EU expansion, Muslim immigration, and searching debates over European identity. The clerics and leaders of Catholic political parties discussed in Patrick Patterson’s essay express an urgency about Europe’s crisis of identity, a

resoluteness to defend the core values of European civilization, and a frustration with the hesitancy of West Europeans. These priests and Christian politicians see as their primary threat not a stream of immigrants from the South and East but the erosion of Europe from the West. The statement of Slovak politician Vladimir Palko expresses this fear of an already advanced process of cultural and spatial disfigurement: "Europe is gradually losing part of its territory." But, according to Palko and others, the threat to Europe is not Islam alone. Catholic and Orthodox writers as well as Jewish and secular intellectuals disparage Western Europe as adrift in enforced secularism, multiculturalism, and greed.⁸⁵ Underlying these criticisms of Western Europe is a new version of the conceptual geography. Eastern Europe is not simply the bulwark against false religions, as medieval kings had believed, nor a wellspring of neglected beliefs or values, as Kundera and John Paul maintained. It has become the repository of truths that Western Europe has rejected. It is the center. It is Europe. This claim was at the core of Ukrainian poet Yuri Andrukhovych's controversial remarks on receiving the 2006 Leipzig Book Prize for European Understanding. Why has the European Union closed itself to Ukraine? he asked. "Perhaps Europe is simply scared, of its very self?" ventured Andrukhovych. "Perhaps it closes itself off from us for the very reason that we took its values too close to heart, that these values have become ours?"⁸⁶ Andre Glucksmann and Bernard-Henri Lévy would agree. In their recent appeal for the inclusion of Ukraine and Georgia in NATO, the prominent French intellectuals argued that the alliance member states had to remember the demonstrators in Kyiv and Tbilisi. The values of Europe had their tangible representation in those who had called for democratic change in 2003 and 2004. In the words of Glucksmann and Lévy, these demonstrators were, like their predecessors in 1989, "the true incarnation of Europe."⁸⁷

But what of the spiritual cartographies of ordinary people? According to one 2004 poll, few citizens of the then-new member states saw themselves as defending spiritual values. Their greatest contribution to Europe, according to most respondents to the survey? Cheap labor.⁸⁸ The hundreds of thousands of East Europeans, particularly Poles, working in Western Europe indicate that the economic lure of accession is strong—much stronger than a defense of the traditional values of Europe.⁸⁹ As these people are moved—literally—by a yearning for

prosperity, one can ask whether the criticisms of an amoral, materialist EU made by church leaders, Christian politicians, and secular intellectuals are directed not toward the mandarins in Brussels but toward the Polish plumber and the Slovak nurse. If so, then what are the political motives infusing their poetic images of a spiritual East and soulless West? Are these elites seeking to stem the outflow of human talent? Are they critiquing a consumer-driven culture that fuels emigration to higher-paying jobs in the West—as well as internal migrations to the new hypermarkets? Or are they attempting to construct some compelling new collective identity, in an age when national communities are becoming less significant?

Still, the poetics of a spiritual Eastern Europe do have a Western audience—and Western patrons. Intellectuals and writers from the region receive awards in Amsterdam, speak at symposia in Dublin, and contribute articles to English-language periodicals. Clearly, the editors and academics who offer the invitations find some resonance in the censures offered by their East European colleagues. But why? What is their investment in a conceptual geography that distinguishes Europe's materialist West from spiritual East? We recall that Gerardus van der Leeuw argued that one of the motives for the sacralization of space was nostalgia, an attempt by moderns to soothe consciences that had lost a sense of the divine. This is why, he wrote, "a sacred position remains holy even when it has been neglected." Van der Leeuw, writing in the 1930s, claimed that Europeans already had become "semi-americanized," living lives in which the worship carried out in the daily tasks of the premodern household had been lost. Moderns "who purchase the objects we require when we need them, and buy furniture in this or that style," know little of the integral unity of the house that was, at once, home and workshop and place of worship.⁹⁰ Moreover, with the spatial separation of day-to-day tasks, each activity loses its meaning. The house itself becomes disenchanted. "If the house," writes van der Leeuw, "becomes a mere place of residence, and the temple an oratory or meeting-place, then the 'positions' gradually lose their cosmic-sacred character. They become merely places to stay in and talk, and it is no longer believed that anything really happens there."⁹¹

In a Europe undergoing administrative and economic unification, perhaps the projection of some deeper spirituality on the new member nations is an effort to revive this cosmic-sacred character, to recapture

the enchantment that had once animated the house and restore meaning to the tasks carried out within. Whatever the intent, these conceptual maps cannot be dismissed as the musings of intellectuals, even if they differ so widely from the geographies of ordinary citizens, who see the West as a space of opportunity and the East as a land of ongoing economic struggle. As Charles Maier points out, the waning of territoriality as the organizing principle of societies means that "culture or civilization replaces space as the stake of international or community conflict."⁹² The religious geography of Europe has become stirred into a kaleidoscope of pixels, but there are some who will seek to draw firm lines, and others who will adjust their thinking based upon those lines. Thus, this map, like the plans of the house, will continue to have meaning.

NOTES

- 1 See Jenő Szűcs, "The Three Historical Regions of Europe," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29, nos. 2–4 (1983): 131–184; J.T.S. Madely, "A Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Church-State Relations in Europe," *West European Politics* 26 (2003): 23–50; Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the Modern World: The Politics of the Borderlands from Pre- to Post-Communism* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); Gale Stokes, "Eastern Europe's Defining Fault Lines," in Sabrina P. Ramet, ed., *Eastern Europe: Politics, Society, and Culture since 1939* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); and Daniel Chirot, ed., *The Origins of Economic Backwardness in Eastern Europe: Economics and Politics from the Middle Ages until the Early Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989). For a geographer's perspective on the various efforts to demarcate and label Eastern Europe, see Alan Dingsdale, *Mapping Modernities: Geographies of Central and Eastern Europe, 1920–2000* (London: Routledge, 2002).
- 2 Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Milica Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (Winter 1995): 917–931.
- 3 Yi-Fu Tuan discusses the notion of "conceptual place" in his essay, "Visibility: The Creation of Place," in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 162–171.
- 4 See Judit Bodnar, *Fin-de-Millénaire Budapest: Metamorphoses of Urban Life* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001); Kate Brown,

"Gridded Lives: Why Kazakhstan and Montana Are Nearly the Same Place," *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 1 (February 2001): 17–48; David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, eds., *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Oxford: Berg, 2002); David Crowley, *Warsaw* (London: Reaktion, 2003); Katherine David-Fox, "Prague-Vienna, Prague-Berlin: The Hidden Geography of Czech Modernism," *Slavic Review* 59, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 735–760; and Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Among the works that focus on specific localities or sub- or supranational regions are: Alison Flieg Frank, *Oil Empire: Visions of Prosperity in Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Eagle Glassheim, "Ethnic Cleansing, Communism, and Environmental Devastation in Czechoslovakia's Borderlands, 1945–1989," *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 78, no. 1 (March 2006): 65–92; and Nathaniel D. Wood, "Urban Self-identification in East Central Europe before the Great War: The Case of Cracow," *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre Est: Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift* 33, part 1–2 (2006): 11–31. For studies that address questions of nationality and nation-building but within regions that bridge national-political boundaries, see Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: From Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Patrick Hyder Patterson, "On the Edge of Reason: The Boundaries of Balkanism in Slovenian, Austrian, and Italian Discourse," *Slavic Review* 62, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 110–141; and Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

- 5 For surveys and criticisms of the current, undeveloped state of the geography of religion, see Chris C. Park, *Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion* (London: Routledge, 1994); and Lily Kong, "Geography and Religion: Trends and Prospects," *Progress in Human Geography* 14 (1999): 355–371; and "Mapping 'New' Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity," *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (2001): 211–233.

Among studies that address the importance of place and spatial relations to religious practice, in addition to others cited later in the essay, see Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1978) and *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Mary Lee Nolan and Sidney Nolan, *Christian Pilgrimage in Modern Western Europe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); and the essays in Hans Knippenberg, ed., *The Changing Religious Landscape of Europe* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2005). Particularly useful to me were the essays in that volume by Jean René Bertrand and Colette Muller on France, Reinhard Henkel on Germany, Elżbieta Bolska-Wodecka on Poland, Alexei D. Krindatch on Ukraine, and Tomáš Havlíček on the Czech Republic. Knippenberg is editing

- a forthcoming issue of *GeoJournal* devoted to the geography of religion in Western and Eastern Europe. My appreciation to him for an advance look at his introduction to that issue: "The Political Geography of Religion: Historical State-Church Relations in Europe and Recent Challenges."
- 6 Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, 2nd. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002) 4.
- 7 Nicu Popescu, "The Return of 'Eastern Europe,'" *European Council on Foreign Relations*, March 5, 2009, http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_popescu_return_eastern_europe/; and Charlemagne, "Europe's Family Squabbles," *The Economist*, February 26, 2009, http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13184616.
- 8 For a survey of the sacred sites of Eastern Europe, see the tour guides directed to the recent stream of "spiritual tourists": Brad Olsen, *Sacred Places Europe: 108 Destinations* (San Francisco: CCC Publishing, 2007); and Kevin J. Wright, *Catholic Shrines of Central and Eastern Europe: A Pilgrim's Travel Guide* (Ligouri, MO: Ligouri, 1999).
- 9 See Belden C. Lane's axioms of the study of sacred places, in *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*, revised edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 19–27; the introductory essay of David Chidester and Edward T. Linenthal in their volume of essays, *American Sacred Space* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 1–42; R.J. Zwi Werblowsky's introduction to the volume *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land*, eds. Benjamin Z. Kedar and R.J. Zwi Werblowsky (New York: New York University Press, 1998); and chapter 1, "A Sense of Place," in Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory and Identity* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 1–32.
- 10 Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred*, 20.
- 11 John Inge discusses the three temporal orientations of a sacred place in *A Christian Theology of Place* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2003) 103–114.
- 12 John Paul II, "Liturgy of the Word at Jasna Góra," Częstochowa, June 4, 1997, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/travels/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_04061997_czestochowa_en.html.
- 13 Chidester and Linenthal, "Introduction," in *American Sacred Space*, 6–9; and Lily Kong, "Mapping 'New' Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity," *Progress in Human Geography* 25, no. 2 (2001): 211–233.
- 14 Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred*, 32–36.
- 15 John Paul II, "Liturgy of the Word at Jasna Góra."
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 In addition to the essays of Chidester and Linenthal, and Lily Kong, see the introduction of John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow to their edited volume, *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London: Routledge, 1991), 1–29. Like Kosovo, Częstochowa has also had different meanings in its history. See Robert Maniura, *Pilgrimage to Images*

- in the Fifteenth Century: The Origins of the Cult of Our Lady of Częstochowa* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 2004).
- 18 Vasa D. Mihailovic, "The Tradition of Kosovo in Serbian Literature," in Wayne S. Vucinich and Thomas A. Emmert, eds., *Kosovo: Legacy of a Medieval Battle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 141–158; and Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo, 1389* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1990), 42–78.
 - 19 See the discussion of Ivan Meštrović's Kosovo Temple project in Andrew Baruch Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 54–59. See also the pro-Yugoslav essay of Tihomir Djordjević, "Kosovo 1389," reprinted in *Kosovo 1389–1989*, special edition of *Serbian Literary Quarterly* (Belgrade: Association of Serbian Writers, 1989), 31–37.
 - 20 Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation: A Study in Phenomenology*, trans. J.E. Turner (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1938), 393–400. Chidester and Linenthal discuss van der Leeuw in their introduction to *American Sacred Space*, 7–9.
 - 21 Chidester and Linenthal, "Introduction," in *American Sacred Space*, 19–20.
 - 22 "If a people does not respect civilization norms of modern mankind, the other, endangered peoples have the right to defence, that is to say, to self-defence. And that is where ethical reasons for making a resolute claim to stop the population explosion of the demographic aggressors are. For the sake of one's own people and for the sake of other endangered people. But, first of all, for the sake of humanity!" Marko Mladenović, "Counter-Revolution in Kosovo, Demographic Policy and Family Planning," *Kosovo 1389–1989*, special edition of *Serbian Literary Quarterly* 67 (1989): 143. See also in the same edition the essay "The Kosovo Cataclysm," by Milan Komnenić, poet and briefly (in 1999) minister of information for federal Yugoslavia.
 - 23 Thanks to Matthew Vanderwerff for reference to the article, "Na Kosovu branimo dostojanstvo ponižene Evrope," *Politika*, February 22, 2008, <http://www.politika.co.yu/rubrike/Politika/Na-Kosovu-branimo-dostojanstvo-ponizene-Evrope.lt.html>
 - 24 Ibid.
 - 25 Eade and Sallnow, "Introduction," 10–15; and Chidester and Linenthal, "Introduction," 16.
 - 26 Mart Bax, *Medjugorje: Religion, Politics, and Violence in Rural Bosnia* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij, 1995).
 - 27 Geneviève Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
 - 28 Parish records suggest that the argument had weight. In the 1920s, some 20,000–22,000 people in the parish received communion each year, but in 1936, four years after the new sanctuary's consecration, the number of communicants had climbed to 62,500. Annual statistics on the numbers of sacraments served were published each February in *Farni věstník*,

- collected in Archiv hlavního města Prahy, Fond Farního úřadu Nejsvětějšího srdce Paně.
- 29 The Bulgarian Church did consecrate the chapel when faced with the prospect that the Macedonian Orthodox Church was going to provide official sanction. See Stephen Kinzer, "Rupite Journal: For a Revered Mystic, a Shrine Now of Her Own," *New York Times*, April 5, 1995, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CEEDB1E39F936A35757C0A963958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>; and Dimana Trankova, "Vanga and Rupite," *Vagabond*, http://www.vagabond-bg.com/?page=live&sub=18&open_news=713.
- 30 George Starr, "Hungarian Reformed Church Architecture of the 19th and 20th Centuries," and Krzysztof Stefański, "Polish Ecclesiastical Architecture of the Early 20th Century—Between the New Form and National Obligation," both in *Centropa: A Journal of Central European Architecture and Related Arts* 3, no. 3 (September 2003); Tanja Damljanović, "The Question of National Architecture in Interwar Yugoslavia: Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana" (Cornell University: PhD dissertation, 2003), chapter 4; and Markéta Večeráková (Svobodová), "Změny liturgického prostoru v pražské meziválečné sakrální architektuře," *Umění* 46, no. 6 (1998): 548–558.
- 31 Damljanović, "The Question of National Architecture in Interwar Yugoslavia," 224–234.
- 32 Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 125–127.
- 33 Anthropologist Ger Duijzings' research offers a picture of the tensions and tolerance between different religious and national groups that have converged at the same pilgrimage sites (e.g., Muslim Gypsies and Orthodox Serbs performing parallel rituals at the Gračanica monastery, or Christians visiting Bektashi dervish lodges in Albania and Macedonia). Duijzings, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).
- 34 Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred*, 24.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 59.
- 36 See Tone Kralj 1900–1974: *Retrospektiva/Retrospective*, catalogue of exhibition at the Moderna galerija Ljubljana, January–March 1998, text by Igor Kranjc (Ljubljana: Moderna galerija, 1998).
- 37 Guntram H. Herb, "National Identity and Territory," in Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan, eds., *Nested Identities: Nationalism, Territory, and Scale* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 9–30; David B. Knight, "Identity and Territory: Geographical Perspectives on Nationalism and Regionalism," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 72 (1982): 514–531; George W. White, *Nation, State, and Territory: Origins, Evolutions, and Relationships* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004); and White, *Nationalism and Territory: Constructing Group Identity in South-eastern Europe* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

- 38 Anthony D. Smith speaks of the “territorialization of memory” as part of this connection of a people to the land. See *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 134–137.
- 39 The best place to find translations of national anthems is Wikipedia. See the entries for “Himnusz”: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Himnusz>; the Bulgarian anthem “Mila Rodino”: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mila_Rodino; the Croatian “Lijepa naša domovino”: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lijepa_nasa_domovino; and “Bože pravde”, the anthem of Serbia and Republika Srpska, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boze_pravde.
- 40 Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 78–82.
- 41 On myths of chosenness, see Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, chapter 3.
- 42 On the nationalist appropriations from the biblical narrative of the Hebrews, see Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, chapter 3; and Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border* (Chichester, UK: J. Wiley & Sons, 1990) 193–195.
- 43 Hedva Ben-Israel, “Hallowed Land in the Theory and Practice of Nationalism,” in Benjamin Z. Kedar and R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, eds., *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 282.
- 44 Ben-Israel, “Hallowed Land in the Theory and Practice of Nationalism,” 291.
- 45 Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness*, 194–195.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 195.
- 47 In the conclusion to their volume on notions of chosenness in modern nationalism, Hartmut Lehmann and William Hutchison stress that Christianity and nationalism have been “partners rather than enemies,” with each enhancing the other’s sense of mission. “Concluding Reflections—and a Glance Forward,” in Lehmann and Hutchison, eds., *Many are Chosen: Divine Election and Western Nationalism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 287–289.
- 48 Ben-Israel addresses these images of dismemberment in his essay, “Hallowed Land in the Theory and Practice of Nationalism,” 282–283.
- 49 The postcards are reprinted in the pro-Trianon tract of Swiss journalist Jean Bauler, *A New Danger to the Peace of Europe* (Berne, 1923), 37 and 39. These postcards and similar protests against the Trianon Treaty are discussed in George White, *Nationalism and Territory*, 76–78. The associations of the Polish kingdom with a Christ-like body were evident in the language of nineteenth-century Poles. For example, Adam Mickiewicz wrote: “The Polish nation did not die. Its body lay in the grave, and its soul had gone from the earth... But on the third day the soul will return to the body, and the nation will rise again and free all the peoples of Europe from slavery.” Quoted in Brian A. Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 28.
- 50 Thongchai Winichakul introduces the term “geo-body” in his study of the mapping of nineteenth-century Siam. See pp. 16–19 and chapter 7 of

- Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).
- 51 In discussing poetics and politics aimed at purity of the holy land, both Zwi Werblowsky and Chidester and Linenthal cite the question of the Chinese Buddhist master (taken from Bernard Faure's study of space and place in Chinese religion): "Since the Dharmakaya fills all space, where in the universe can I find a place to shit?" Chidester and Linenthal, "Introduction," 10–11; and Zwi Werblowsky, "Introduction: Mindscape and Landscape," 13.
- 52 Tim Cresswell, *In Place / Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
- 53 Tim Cresswell, "Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice," in Kay Anderson, ed., *The Handbook of Cultural Geography* (London: Sage, 2003) 277.
- 54 Statistics on rates of participation in services are from Witold Zdaniewicz, Lucjan Adamczuk, and Mariusz Chmielewski, "Dominicantes i comunicantes 1980–1991," and Zdaniewicz, Adamczuk, and Grzegorz Gudaszewski, "Dominicantes i comunicantes 1992–1999," in Witold Zdaniewicz and Tadeusz Zembrzusi, eds., *Kościół i religijność Polaków 1945–1999* (Warsaw: Instytut Statystyki Kościoła Katolickiego SAC, 2000), 479–547.
- 55 Zdeněk R. Nešpor, "Religious Processes in Contemporary Czech Society," *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* 40, no. 3 (2004): 277–295; and Tomáš Havlíček, "Czechia: Secularisation of the Religious Landscape," in Knippenberg, ed., *The Changing Religious Landscape of Europe*, 189–197.
- 56 For a geographer's analysis of religious change in the Czech Lands, see Helena Brotánková, "Religiozita v okresech ČR v období 1921–2001" (Charles University, Přírodovědecká fakulta: MA thesis, 2004).
- 57 Zdeněk Boháč, sections 28–29, in *Atlas církevních dějin českých zemí 1918–1999* (Prague: Karmelitánské, 1999).
- 58 In addition to the Church of the Sacred Heart in Vinohrady, these new churches were: Church of St. Václav in Vršovice (consecrated in 1930), Christ the King in Vysočany (1930), St. Elizabeth in Kbely (1932), St. Agnes of Bohemia in Spořilov (1935), Mary, Queen of Peace, in Lhota (consecrated in 1937), St. Francis of Assisi in Chodov (1938), and St. Theresa in Kobylisi (1938). See Boháč, "Vystavba katolických kostelů v zázemí pražských měst v letech 1851–1939," Map 12 in *Atlas církevních dějin českých zemí*.
- 59 Over 60 percent of survey respondents born between 1924 and 1935 answered that they had gone to services regularly at age 12, meaning at least once a week, while more than 80 percent of respondents answered that they had attended services occasionally, which included attendance once a month or attendance on special days. See Jan Spousta, "Changes in Religious Values in the Czech Republic," *Sociologický časopis / Czech Sociological Review* 38, no. 3 (2002): 345–363. A summary of the survey data is available at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>.

- 60 Jim addressed this aim at greater length in the paper presented at our meeting in Warsaw: "The Menace of Christendom: The German Problem and the Catholic Church in Postwar Poland," unpublished paper presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 2006.
- 61 The saints from Poland canonized during John Paul's papacy are Albert Chmielowski (canonized in 1989, worked and died in Kraków), Maximilian Kolbe (canonized 1982, born near Łódź, educated in Lwów, founder of a monastery near Warsaw, and martyred at Auschwitz); Raphael Kalinowski (canonized 1991, founded convents in Przemyśl and Lwów and a monastery in Wadowice, where he is buried); Jadwiga of Poland (canonized 1997, buried in Kraków); Kinga of Poland (canonized 1999, founded convent in Stryżów); Maria Faustyna Kowalska (canonized in 2000, buried in Kraków); Ursula Ledóchowska (canonized 2005, born in Austria, worked in Łódź, buried in Piekary near Poznań); Józef Sebastian Pelczar (canonized 2003, bishop of Przemyśl); Edith Stein (canonized 1998, born in Breslau, killed at Auschwitz). We can add to this list the two Polish saints that Benedict XVI canonized in October 2005, immediately after John Paul's death: Józef Bilczewski and Zygmunt Gorazdowski, both of whom worked and died in Lwów.
- 62 José Casanova, "Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration," in Timothy A. Byrnes and Peter J. Katzenstein, eds, *Religion in an Expanding Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) 84.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 85.
- 64 On this resurgence of religion in Serbia, see Mirko Blagjević, "Desecularization of Contemporary Serbian Society," *Religion in Eastern Europe* 28, no. 1 (February 2008): 37–50.
- 65 See Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*; and Bakić-Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia." A recent addition to this literature is Dickie Wallace's article, "Hyperrealizing 'Borat' with the Map of the European 'Other,'" *Slavic Review* 67, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 35–49. Wallace builds upon and responds to these standard texts on the topic.
- 66 British writer Patrick Leigh Fermor devoted much space in the narration of his travels across the region in the 1930s to descriptions of churches and altars and vivid synopses of local religious history. See his *Between the Woods and the Water: On Foot to Constantinople from the Hook of Holland: The Middle Danube to the Iron Gates* (New York: Penguin, 1988). Fermor's countryman, Jason Goodwin, recounting his journey from Poland to Turkey six decades later, admitted his repeated embarrassment in encounters with believers. Goodwin, *On Foot to the Golden Horn: A Walk to Istanbul* (New York: Henry Holt, 1993).
- 67 Robert D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History* (1993; New York: Vintage, 1994), 33.

- 68 The line about a "culture-bound peasant" comes from one of John Paul's defenders: James V. Schall, "Of Inquisitors and Pontiffs: Criticizing John Paul II," *Homiletic & Pastoral Review* 81, no. 9 (June 1981): 19. Another admirer, George Weigel, also recognizes the Western prejudice against a pope from Poland at the start of his biography, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of John Paul II* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999).
- 69 Cornwell, *The Pontiff in Winter: Triumph and Conflict in the Reign of John Paul II* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 15–16.
- 70 Moynihan, *The Washington Post*, October 7, 1979, quoted in Schall, "Of Inquisitors and Pontiffs," 23.
- 71 The various appropriations of Górecki's symphony and its popularity are discussed in Luke B. Howard, "Motherhood, *Billboard*, and the Holocaust: Perceptions and Receptions of Górecki's Symphony No. 3," *Musical Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 131–159.
- 72 Howard, "Motherhood, *Billboard*, and the Holocaust," 150. As I learned from the excellent BA thesis of my student Esther Miller, American audiences and CD-buyers are likewise drawn to East European folk and choral performers for the perceived "spiritual" and "timeless" qualities of their music. Record companies, tour organizers, and music writers highlight these elements in their promotion of such performers, as Donna Buchanan explains in the case of the popular Bulgarian women's choirs. See Buchanan, "Bulgaria's Magical, *Mystère* Tour: Postmodernism, World Music Marketing, and Political Change in Eastern Europe," review essay, *Ethnomusicology* 41, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 131–157, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/852589>.
- 73 See the "Arts and Faith Top 100 Spiritually Significant Films" (2006), <http://www.artsandfaith.com/t100/>; and Joseph Cunneen, "Kieslowski on the Mountaintop: Ten Commandments from the Late Polish Director," *Commonweal* (August 15, 1997), 11–15. One scholar of Kieslowski describes the director as a "hopeful agnostic." Joseph G. Kickasola, *The Films of Krzysztof Kieslowski: The Liminal Image* (New York: Continuum, 2004) 34.
- 74 A useful introduction to Slavoj Žižek, which discusses the philosopher in his Slovene context, is Rebecca Mead's essay, "The Marx Brother: How a Philosopher from Slovenia Became an International Star," *The New Yorker*, May 5, 2003. For sympathetic readings of Žižek by American Catholic and Evangelical academics, see Paul J. Griffiths, "Christ and Critical Theory," *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* 145 (August–September 2004): 46–56; and Ashley Woodiwiss, "Philosophy at the End of the World," *Books & Culture* 12, no. 6 (November–December 2006): 30–33. Havel's books have received praise in *Commonweal*, *First Things*, and *Books & Culture*, and he was the subject of an admiring survey by James W. Sire, editor of InterVarsity Christian Press: *Vaclav Havel: The Intellectual Conscience of International Politics: An Introduction, Appreciation & Critique* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press,

- 2001). For the take of the Catholic journal *First Things* on Polanyi and Kołakowski, see John Rose, "The Feeling Intellect," *First Things* (March 2007), http://www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=5450&var_recherche=polanyi; and Zbigniew Janowski, "Main Currents of Kolakowski," *First Things* (October 2006), http://www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=5361&var_recherche=kolakowski.
- 75 Vjekoslav Perica, "Churches and the Twilight of the Slavic Myth" (paper presented at the conference "Religion and the Challenges of Modernity: Christian Churches in 19th and 20th Century Eastern Europe," German Historical Institute, Warsaw, June 2006).
- 76 Milan Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," *New York Review of Books*, April 26, 1984, 34.
- 77 John Paul II, *Slavorum Apostoli*, encyclical epistle given in Rome, June 2, 1985, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_19850602_slavorum-apostoli_en.html.
- 78 Kundera, "The Tragedy of Central Europe," 36.
- 79 John Paul II, *Slavorum Apostoli*.
- 80 My emphasis. Adam Michnik, "Confessions of a Converted Dissident: Essay for the 2001 Erasmus Prize," *eurozine*, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2001-12-28-michnik-en.html>.
- Similarly, in the criticisms of Western feminism by Slavenka Drakulić, one finds inferences of an authority earned through the experience of political repression and day-to-day deprivation. See Drakulić, "Introduction: First-Person Singular," in *Café Europa* (New York: Norton, 1997) and especially her responses to Western feminism in *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1993).
- 81 Stefan Auer, "The Revolutions of 1989 Revisited," *eurozine*, June 14, 2004, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-06-14-auer-en.html>.
- 82 Vaclav Havel, "Address to the European Parliament," Strasbourg, March 8, 1994, http://old.hrad.cz/president/Havel/speeches/1994/0803_uk.html.
- 83 Pastoral Letter of Slovak Bishops on European Integration, May 15, 2002, <http://www.kbs.sk/?cid=1117564487>.
- 84 Ignác Romsics, "From Christian Shield to EU Member," *Hungarian Quarterly* 48, no. 188 (Winter 2007), <http://www.hungarianquarterly.com/no188/2.html>.
- 85 For example, Palko's alarm over an eroding Europe is echoed by Nobel laureate Imre Kertész: "A civilisation that does not clearly proclaim its values, or which leaves these proclaimed values high and dry, is stepping on the path to perdition and terminal debility." Kertész, "Europe's Oppressive Legacy," keynote address to the conference, "Perspective Europe," Academy of Arts, Berlin, June 1–2, 2007, published in *signandsight.com*, June 19, 2007, <http://www.signandsight.com/features/1382.html>.
- 86 Yuri Andurkhovych, "Europe—My Neurosis," acceptance speech for the 2006 Leipzig Book Prize for European Understanding, *signandsight.com*, March 21, 2006, <http://www.signandsight.com/features/670.html>.

- 87 Andre Gluckmann and Bernard-Henri Lévy, "Nouveau NATO," *New Republic*, April 2, 2008, <http://www.tnr.com/politics/story.html?id=040888c8-fb90-4e5a-b781-43f681291f52>.
- 88 One-third of Poles saw their religious and moral contribution as most important, as opposed to 13 percent of Hungarians, 18 percent of Slovaks, and 7 percent of Czechs. By contrast, 55 percent of Poles, 55 percent of Hungarians, 50 percent of Czechs, and 46 percent of Slovaks saw "cheap labor force" as their contribution to united Europe. "Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia: What Will They Bring to the European Union?" results of survey conducted by the Central European Opinion Research Group Foundation, April 2004, http://www.ceorg-europe.org/research/2004_04.pdf.
- 89 Indeed, as one Anglo-Polish commentator suggests, perhaps the illiberal environment of Catholic Poland has been one factor in pushing young Poles to seek work in Western Europe. Irena Maryniak, "The Polish Plumber and the Image Game," *eurozine*, November 15, 2006, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2006-11-15-maryniak-en.html>.
- 90 Van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, 396.
- 91 *Ibid.*, 398.
- 92 Charles S. Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 3 (June 2000): 829.

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